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BLACKWOOD'S
STANDARD NOVELS

ANNALS OF THE PARISH
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THE
ANNALS OF THE PARISH
AND THE
AYRSHIRE LEGATEES

BY
JOHN GALT

WITH MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR

NEW EDITION

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
MEMOIR.....	1
THE ANNALS OF THE PARISH.....	1
THE AYRSHIRE LEGATEES	167
ILLUSTRATIONS, ANECDOTES, AND CRITICAL REMARKS	297

MEMOIR OF GALT

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF THE AUTHOR.

JOHN GALT, the future author of the "Annals of the Parish," and of other works which deservedly give him a place among the Scottish Classics, was born at Irvine in Ayrshire, on the 2d May 1779. In his early childhood he was of a feeble and delicate, or rather sensitive, constitution, although his complaints never assumed any serious form. His earliest instructions in reading were given at home; and, until his tenth year, he was regularly carried with the rest of his family to Greenock, in which town a part of every season was spent.

When yet a very little child, he became passionately fond of flowers, and confesses to have felt an inexpressible delight in cultivating them, and in watching their development; but this latterly gave way to a preference for shrubs and trees. His early aptitude for acquirement was not great, although he exhibited indications of a clear and tenacious memory.

Amongst his earliest reminiscences, he used to relate the following, which gave indication for predilections quite of another kind. A set of religious zealots having established themselves at Irvine, under the auspices of a Mrs Buchan from Glasgow, who had won over a simple-minded Relief clergyman there, of the name of White, to a belief in the orthodoxy of her ravings, his congregation found themselves so scandalized, that they were

at length forced to dispense with his services. He was not, however, to be so put down; and, after his deposition, he continued to preach to his followers, who were designated Buchanites from the founder of the sect, from a tent in the open air. This deluded person gave herself out as the woman spoken of in the twelfth chapter of Revelations, and Mr White as the man child she had brought forth; and public curiosity was kept up by the believers in her doctrines meeting in the night-time, to be instructed by their prophetess. The clamour, agitation, and nuisance became at length so great, that the magistrates were obliged to interfere, and cause her to be dismissed from the town, from which she and her high priest were accompanied by some fifty or sixty people, chanting psalms, and saying they were going to the New Jerusalem. In the midst of this rabble rout was our young hero, whose imagination had been captivated by the strange scene. He was, however, followed on the road by his mother, who seized hold of him as soon as she could discover him, and, shaking his idle heterodoxy out of him, reclaimed him, to be brought up in the common-sense presbyterianism of the domestic hearth.

Among recollections, perhaps earlier still, is one of a folio volume which young Galt saw at Kilmarnock, containing, among other subjects, an engraving of the Falls of Niagara, which produced such a vivid impression on his excitable imagination, as never afterwards to have been obliterated; and another of a storm at sea, which in after years he so graphically described in "The Provost." From the natural delicacy already alluded to, he avoided, in childhood, the more bustling exercises of other boys of his own age; and was fond of lounging on his bed, surrounded by all sorts of ballad and story books. When out of doors, and not engaged with his flowers, he ferreted out the society of some old women, versed in tale and legend, who lived in the close or alley behind his grand-

mother's house; and took great delight in listening to their marvellous narrations. The chief among these cronies were the mother of the gallant Lieutenant Gueliland, who was flag-officer to Lord Nelson, and killed at the battle of Trafalgar; and a poor widow, bent by decrepitude into a hoop, who, in uncheered loneliness, earned a wintry living by her spinning-wheel. The story of her life and privations deeply affected our young romancist's sympathies; and, as he sat assisting her to reel her pirns, a strong attachment was formed for her. These early humanizing lessons seem never afterwards to have been obliterated from his mind; and her character served him in after years as a model in his delineations of meek and unrepining destitution.

From his rapid growth, and consequent tenderness of constitution, it was judged improper to send young Galt at the first to a public school, and he received private lessons from a teacher in the evenings. The present Lord Justice-Clerk Boyle left the grammar school of Irvine in the same year when he entered it; and among his schoolfellows, one who afterwards distinguished himself, was Eckford, the future grand architect and builder of the American navy. During 1788 and the subsequent season, his progress was, however, any thing but remarkable; and about this period, his father, being in command of a West Indiaman, built a house for the better accommodation of his family at Greenock, and the whole went permanently to reside there. He was there placed at school under a Mr M'Gregor, who is described as an excellent teacher, but of wayward temper; and was by him instructed in penmanship and arithmetic, mathematics, and the French language. From among his classfellows he selected as his associates William Spence, the future author of the "Treatise on Logarithmic Transcendents," and whose biographer he afterwards was; and James Park, a lad of taste and talent, who, in process of time, became his literary Mentor,

and between whom continued through after life all that fervour and cordiality of Damon and Pythias friendship, appertaining, it is to be feared, only to the intimacies which have been formed in the enthusiasm of early boyhood.

Galt gave early indication of a propensity for rhyming ; and, when only six years old, had strung together some couplets regarding the melancholy fate of two young larks which had been given him. Nursery tales were to him "an appetite and a feeling ;" and he took great delight in listening to ballads, especially such as related to the wild and wonderful. When still a mere boy, Pope's translation of the Iliad fell in his way, and such was the impression that it made on his susceptible nature, that, with all the enthusiasm of a young mind, which feels more than it reasons, he is said to have knelt when he had finished the perusal of it, and prayed that he might, some day or other, be endowed with the powers which might enable him to produce something of a similar kind.

Although our young aspirant never made any particular appearance at school, but was, on the contrary, reckoned rather below par than otherwise in his powers of acquiring knowledge, the bias of his faculties for particular studies began early to develope itself. We have already alluded to his taste for gardening, to which were added the apparently not very accordant ones—for music and for mechanics. Several of his musical attempts, composed at this time, were in after years published ; and one of them, "Lochnagar," adapted to the words of Lord Byron, attained an extensive popularity. Among his mechanical constructions were an Eolian harp, a hurdy-gurdy, and an edephusion, which he got up after seeing Lutherburg's exhibition.

All these aspirations, tastes, and feelings were, however, soon after absorbed in a passion for reading, which found nourishment in the resources of a public library at Greenock, where, strange to say, the collection of books was made with a care

that the useful and solid should predominate over the imaginative and the marvellous. This propensity was violently opposed by his mother, who feared that it might incapacitate him for the active business of life; and she took every means to thwart him in its indulgence. In after life she regretted this, although, at the time, her conduct was far from unnatural. It arose from her regret in observing the sleepy, meditative, and inactive disposition of her son; and she set down the sin at the door of his predilection for books—of which, however, it was the effect, not the cause. His father was a man of excellent dispositions, but of easy nature and moderate ability; and it would appear in this, as in most other instances on record—if genius and talent are to be at all considered as hereditary—that he owed these to his mother, who was a very singular person, shrewd, observant, full of humour, and keenly alive to the ridiculous, quaintly original in her powers of expression, and “needing not the spectacles of books to read nature.” The writer of this brief memoir knew her well, and had many opportunities of witnessing the qualities which he here ascribes to her.

Her son continued to reside with her at Greenock for fourteen or fifteen years—a period of his life, which, to use his own striking expression, if not the happiest, was certainly remembered as the longest. Park and he proceeded in their education together—the former proving himself the better French, and the latter the more proficient Italian scholar. They studied geography on the maps, and land-surveying in the fields; and, during leisure hours, vied with each other in poetical composition. Park was about a year older than his friend, and was the superior versifier of the two—a fact which the other felt deeply, and was constrained to acknowledge, although less as a source of chagrin than as an incentive to emulation.

After leaving school, young Galt and his “fides Achates” were placed in the Custom-House at Greenock—a practice there

common for young men who were destined for mercantile pursuits, principally with the view of improving their handwriting by the copying of entries in the books of that establishment. Here the friends remained only for a limited time, and then returned to their literary studies. Both became again poetical; and Park, whose mind appears to have been one more remarkable for taste than originality, is acknowledged to have been of great use in directing his friend in the choice of books. The latter wisely confined himself to the "*Nugæ Canoræ*;" but, after some rhapsodical odes and elegies, Galt made a graver attempt to climb "the steep where fame's proud temple shines afar," in the form of a tragedy, to be entitled "*The Royal Victim*," and founded on the fortunes of Mary Queen of Scots, as recorded in Dr Gilbert Stuart's history of her times. We shall not attempt to compare the composition with that of St John, written before, or that of James Grahame, written after, although the manuscript has been preserved. With some felicities of poetical expression, and some touches of natural feeling, it is just what might have been expected from its author at the time—a very juvenile and unequal performance.

Our youth was now entered in the mercantile office of Messrs James Miller and Co. The head of the house is represented by his pupil to have been rather inclined to the Ercles' vein, pompous and magniloquent, but withal kind and good-natured. For his nephew, Mr Ewing, he always continued to speak with a respect and affection, which showed the high place he held in his regards. Indeed, he thus himself writes in after years of that gentleman:—"In all the vicissitudes of a very varied life, I have never met with a person of such truly sterling worth. His talents were not, in a literary point of view, comparable to those of many that I have seen; but I never saw in any one such equanimity of temper, or greater purity of heart."

The attendance of our embryo merchant at the desk was

regular; and, to all outward appearance, he had enlisted himself among the votaries of sale and barter. His mind, however, required some other outlet for its energies, and another new bias began to show itself. This was in a turn for antiquarian lore, in which he indulged with much delight; and, at length, he nursed the wish to expend the stores of knowledge thus acquired on some fitting subject. The perusal of Pinkerton's "Essay on the Goths" at length directed him to the choice of one, and he determined to enwreath "The Battle of Largs" with the flowers of verse. This poem long occupied his chief attention as a literary labour; but lighter topics were occasionally taken up as by-play, in the intervals devoted to its composition. These appeared in the shape of contributions to the "Greenock Advertiser" and the "Scots Magazine," and in a life of Wilson, the author of "Clyde," which, with a few alterations from the pen of Dr Leyden, the editor, was prefixed to his republication of that poem.

The speculations and sentiments which had engendered the French Revolution, were, at this time, agitating the public mind, and Greenock did not escape the contagion which emanated from Godwin, Wolstonecroft, Holcroft, Thelwall, and the writers of that pestilential school. Most of the sanguine and the aspiring among the young were smitten with the fallacious promises held out by ingenious sophistry; but, fortunately, Galt and his friend remained untainted. They perceived the poison which oozed out from the "Political Justice," and other works of the same kidney, and they vainly longed for the development of powers to expose the hollowness of the philosophy contained in the defence of hypotheses so foundationless. What they could not, however, at this time, do by intellect, they endeavoured to assist in accomplishing in a different way; and, to show their loyalty to the crown, and their veneration for the constitution, they were actively instrumental in getting up a company or

two of riflemen, who offered their services to government, and were accepted.

By these and various other circumstances, was the adolescence of John Galt diversified. With Park and Agnew Craufurd, another companion, he made pedestrian expeditions at various times to Edinburgh—to Loch Lomond—to the border counties, then becoming famous in song by the Minstrelsy of Sir Walter Scott—and even to the north of England, so far as Durham; and with these, and a few other young men, a society was formed for the reading of essays and the discussion of all things possible and impossible. Spence's speculations are said to have been very profound; embracing not only the favourite topic of Abraham Jenkinson—the cosmogony of the world, but the durability of matter, planetary motion, and premundane space. Park wisely took a lower flight, and confined himself to illustrations of the moral duties, as exhibited in the history of mankind; while Galt describes his own essays as rigmarole things, crude and undigested, yet full of aspirations after something which he could only then half perceive, and consequently but imperfectly describe—gropings of the Cyclops round his cave. The association lasted for several years; and as the meetings were held once a week, were doubtless of some use, not only in stimulating to research, but in developing intellectual powers which might otherwise have remained latent.

A circumstance at length occurred, which hastened the departure of Galt from Greenock, and was thus eventually destined to exercise no small share of influence over his fortunes. The first war of the French Revolution contributed to form in Glasgow a class of merchants, more distinguished for their wealth and good-luck than for their education and gentlemanly feelings. One of this set, it appears, wrote, on a matter of business, in a most abusive and improper manner; and Galt happened to be the person in the counting-office into whose hands the letter

fell. His young blood boiled within him; and, taking the whole weight of the house upon his shoulders, nothing would satisfy him but to set out and demand an apology. He left, accordingly, early next morning for Glasgow, but found that the object of pursuit had gone to Edinburgh. Thither was he followed with the same eagerness; and, being discovered in one of the hotels, the door of the parlour was bolted from within, and an apology not only dictated, but obtained by the volunteer knight-errant.

Instead, however, of returning to Greenock after having accomplished the chivalric object of his expedition, Galt diverged to Irvine, and intimated to his father his design of leaving Scotland. After remaining at home for a month or two, and revolving various plans in his mind, he determined upon trying his fortunes in London. There he arrived in June 1804, accompanied by his father, in no very happy frame of mind, and certainly with no fixed objects of pursuit.

After having delivered a whole bale of introductory letters, without any practical benefit to his future views, he saw that every thing was to depend on his own exertions. Day by day he accordingly looked about for himself, and, meanwhile, amused his solitary leisure by preparing for the press his "Battle of Largs," already mentioned—a sort of Gothic epic, and the most important of his merely poetical efforts. It is written principally in the octo-syllabic measure; and full of Mallet, Pinkerton, and the Edda, our bard, like Gray and Warton, makes the northern mythology pliant to the purposes of machinery. The plan is somewhat daring, nor can it be said to be altogether unfortunate; and it should be remembered that it was sketched out before Scott had given any exemplar of his splendidly poetic narrative. As a composition, however, it is more indicative of power than taste; but, unequal as it must be confessed to be, some of its reflections are vigorous, and many of its descriptive passages full of an originality and grasp, far beyond the range

of the common-place versifier. The subject is the invasion of Scotland by Haco, King of Norway, in 1263, and the repulse of the Danes and Norwegians by Alexander the Third.

Partly, probably, from want of perfect satisfaction with his own performance, and partly from a latent dread that the accusation of verse might exercise a malign influence over his mercantile prospects, certain it is that the book was suppressed by its author almost immediately after the announcement of its publication. It appeared anonymously; but the secrets of the literary world are not easily kept—what from the vanity of poets, and what from the indiscretion of their friends; and, in this case, from an extract or two having been previously given in the Scots Magazine, the whereabouts of the author became less than problematical.

After a few months' looking about for himself, Galt at length found a mercantile connexion which appeared suitable to his views. A copartnery was in consequence formed with a Mr M'Lachlan, and it was hoped a fortunate one; but, in a little time, it was found that the affairs of that gentleman had been previously involved, and bills which were understood to have been paid off, had been only renewed. This was a sad blight to his prospects; but being now involved beyond the hope of disentanglement, he strenuously set himself to battle with these embarrassments, and they were at length, although only for the mean time, overcome. The connexion progressed to a duration of three years, with various vicissitudes of fortune, when the difficulties of a correspondent involved the house in ruin. A subsequent connexion was formed between Galt and his brother Thomas; but the truth is, that neither had now much liking for the mercantile profession. In a short time the latter set out to Honduras, where he established himself, and the former entered himself of Lincoln's Inn, with the view of being, in due time, called to the bar. It happened that about the commencement

of 1805, his early companions, Park and Spence, came to London to see the lions. Galt accompanied them to Blenheim; and, having remained for a day or two at Oxford to view the colleges, it occurred to him, while standing with them in the quadrangle of Christ Church, that it said little for the men of that foundation to have so long neglected such a grand subject as the life of their founder. But it was not for several years after this, and when a lingering nervous indisposition obliged him to keep the house—about the time indeed that he became a member of Lincoln's Inn—that he seriously commenced pursuing a course of reading, with the view of ultimately taking up the subject himself. Early in 1809, he set about the work regularly, and in the summer of the same year had completed the outline of it. In his researches he had access to the library and manuscripts in Jesus College, Oxford, where he found many scarce books and papers, illustrative of his subject, which had escaped the eyes of Cavendish, Fiddes, and Hume; and I remember his relating to me the curious feelings of delight with which he unrolled documents, to the ink of which the grains of sand were still adhering, and which 'consequently could never have been opened through the long centuries since they had been originally penned. Into whatever the mind of Galt entered, it did so with enthusiasm and ardour; but the state of his health at this time compelled him, after a season, to desist, and, being obliged to refrain from all study, he went abroad. Afterwards, at Palermo, when partially recovered, he renewed his researches, and the Jesuits having given him free access to their superb library, he seems to have spared no pains to render his account of "The Life and Administration of Wolsey," at once worthy of his own powers and of public acceptance.

On the day of his arrival at Gibraltar, our traveller met with Lord Byron, who was then on that tour with Sir John Cam Hobhouse, which has been immortalized in the first and second

cantos of Childe Harold. An acquaintance was subsequently formed, and the three sailed in the same packet to Sardinia and Malta. The particulars connected with this casual rencontre with the great poet, were in after years graphically detailed in a memoir of Lord Byron, which Mr Galt gave to the world, and which was not more remarkable for the great popularity it obtained, than for the having called down upon its author a degree of abuse altogether disproportionate to its real demerits. That a set of petulant and disappointed scribblers, who envied yet could not equal the author's fame, should have attacked his book, is to be pitied, but not to be wondered at; but, *mirabile dictu*, even Thomas Moore thought it worth his while to join in the silly assault, and he dealt his particular blow in a set of verses, not a whit more remarkable for their wit than for their want of candour. The splendour of Byron's genius none dare dispute; but they who would lay his moral failings to the account of his intellectual greatness, certainly do little to elevate the cause of sound philosophy.

Having resided for a season in Sicily, Mr Galt repaired to Malta; and, after touching at the islands of Zante and Patras, paid a visit to Corinth. Proceeding thence to Tripolizza, where he had an interview with the famous Ali Pasha, he bent his course towards Athens, to the Waywodæ of which place he had received a particular introduction from the Vizier Vilhi. He took up his residence in the Propaganda Fide of Rome Monastery, and Lord Byron chancing to be also at that time in the same city, their acquaintance was renewed.

While there, Mr Galt's health was very variable, at times obliging him to shut himself entirely up within the walls of his domicile; nor could this solitude otherwise than have hung heavy on his hands, had he not endeavoured to while away ennui by poetical pastimes. One of his effusions he entitled "Il Inconsueto," being descriptions of scenes in a voyage to

Palestine, written in the Spenserian stanza, and another, "The Atheniad," a mock epic in heroic verse, relating to the Elgin marbles, in which the heathen deities are made to avenge the cause of Minerva. The manuscripts of both were, it seems, shown to the noble poet; and the circumstance is here mentioned, for the sake of pointing out the curious coincidence—if nothing more—that both Galt and Byron should have been, at the same time and in the same place, occupied with similar subjects, and both in the same kinds of verse. Here, however, the parallel ends. The latter was a great poet, which the former was not: Galt's mastery lay in a different line. The "*Il Inconsueto*" was lost in manuscript; but "*The Atheniad*," which contains many vigorous lines, has been preserved.

After leaving Athens, Mr Galt visited Hydra, Zea, and Scios, and thence proceeded by Ephesus to Smyrna. In reference to some commercial scheme connected with the firm of Messrs Struthers, Kennedy, and Co., he obtained possession of a large building on the island of Myconi, which had been originally erected by Count Orloff, the consul-general of Russia in the reign of Catharine the Second, when that ambitious queen had an eye to the dominion of the Grecian archipelago. This circumstance, along with the seeming want of any feasible purpose for wandering about, gave rise to the idea that our valetudinarian was a political agent, bent on the furtherance of some secret mission. The allegation was no doubt idle enough; but, when we consider the country and the times, might have brought down on a suspected head many dangerous consequences.

Returning again to Athens, he found that his former apartments in the Propaganda Monastery had been taken possession of by Lord Byron; but he was accommodated with others in the same building. Two personages, who afterwards attracted great notoriety in the world, although in very different spheres, were also there at this particular time, and, along with the Marquis

of Sligo, were unceasing in their kind attentions to our traveller who continued a great invalid—the one was the Lady Hesther Stanhope, the domiciled among the Moslem—and the other, Mr Bruce, who assisted in the escape of La Valette.

On leaving the city of the Acropolis, Mr Galt visited Marathon, Thebes, and Chersonæa—sounds which stir the heart like the sound of a trumpet; ascended Parnassus; and, at Delphi, drank at the Castalian spring; wound through the pass of Thermopylæ; looked upon the plain of Pharsalia; and rode, by moonlight, across the vale of Tempe.

Having crossed the gulf of Salonica, Mr Galt proceeded to Constantinople, where, after remaining some time, he penetrated into Nicomedia; thence traversing the northern limb of Asia Minor, he at length reached Kirpe, on the shores of the Black Sea. It would appear that his object in taking this little frequented track, was to ascertain the possibility of conveying British goods, with any chance of successful speculation, into particular parts of the continent, in spite of the interdict pronounced by the Berlin and Milan decrees; and the journey created some feeling of disappointment as to the practicability of the scheme, so far as that particular quarter was concerned; but this was counterbalanced by the advantages which it developed with reference to others. It was therefore arranged that a considerable cargo—amounting to a hundred bales of goods—should be sent to Widdin, whose arrival our traveller was to precede, and to see it deposited there until it could be transmitted to Hungary, by way of Orsova. This journey was attended with many difficulties and dangers, as it was through a region little known; across “mountains high and deserts idle;” during the winter season; and, moreover, at a time when the Russians and Turks were at war. His enthusiasm was, however, not to be daunted. Leaving Adrianople, he visited Philippi, where erst the stalwart ghost of Cæsar darkened the tent of

Brutus; and hastened on to Sophia, then the headquarters of Vilhi Pasha, who kindly gave him an escort of horsemen across Mount Hæmus.

Having remained at Widdin as long as his commercial ties made it necessary or useful, he travelled along "the banks of the dark-rolling Danube," on his retrograde route to Constantinople, where, having arrived, he proceeded homewards by sea. At this time he chanced to remain for several days at Missolonghi, since rendered famous and familiar to British ears as the death-place of Byron. While there, it chanced that the works of Goldoni fell into his hands; and the weather being so wet that he could not stir abroad, he translated, as an amusement, the "*La Gelosia di Lindoro*," and another comedy, which, under the name of "*Love, Honour, and Interest*," was also published afterwards in the *New British Theatre*. The thing is here mentioned as a feat—the translation of each drama having been the work of a single day.

At Messina, to which Mr Galt next voyaged, the crew were put under quarantine for eighteen days. No situation more lugubrious can be imagined. The room assigned to him looked solely into a court-yard, the area of which was used as a burying-ground. He craved a book, and that brought to him was the "*Life and Works of Alfieri*," which he now saw for the first time, and the impression which they made upon him, read under such circumstances, appears to have never been afterwards obliterated. He betook himself to translating select portions, to make himself more familiar with the style and habits of thought of that singular writer; and he was struck with the feeling that some of his finest natural touches of passion were marred in their effect, by the introduction of some recondite and classical, or, in other words, unnatural expression. To test the truth of this impression, he set about himself composing a series of dramas, founded on the same principles as those of the Italian

author, in so far as appertained to simplicity of plot, and the number of characters to be introduced; but avoiding, as much as possible, the rocks on which his predecessor appeared, in his judgment, to have made wreck of many of his finest things.

The dramas thus produced were afterwards published in a distinct volume, and are six in number—"Maddalen"—"Agamemnon"—"Lady Macbeth"—"Antonio"—"Caravaggio," and "Clytemnestra." The volume contains, certainly, much that is crude, and not a little that is defective both in point of taste and of composition; but let those who have taken their cue as to its merits only from a few passages cynically extracted, and who probably have never seen the dramas themselves, turn to that of Clytemnestra before they unreservedly condemn. That drama is not only finely conceived, but, in many parts, admirably executed. Not that any passages are poetically splendid, but that all the scenes bear on the development of one great design. The character of Orestes is full of simplicity and of nature, elevated by a pious enthusiasm.

Proceeding on his homeward route from Sardinia, Mr Galt touched at Gibraltar, and thence made for Ireland, from which he crossed to Greenock. After remaining with his friends and relations for a few days, he again set out for London, and reached the capital, having been absent from it nearly three years. His mind was now occupied about the success of his Levant scheme; as he was given to understand that it was about to be proposed to government by Sir Stratford Canning, and that, moreover, that diplomatist was to recommend his being placed at the head of it. With such prospects before him, he determined upon not proceeding with the study of the law—a resolution, the propriety of which the future sequence of events led him occasionally to doubt.

It was in the interval of suspense and inaction that now occurred, that he prepared for the press his "Voyages and

Travels," as also his "Letters from the Levant." Both works have great merit, and were well received by the public. They bear evidence throughout of an observant and intelligent mind, and are full of valuable reflections, whether referring to the social, the political, or the commercial state and prospects of the countries which the author visited.

While within the gloomy shadow of these uncertain prospects, and in this fluctuating state of feeling, Mr Kirkman Finlay, afterwards member for Glasgow, and so well known in the commercial world, explained to Mr Galt the resolution of his house to establish a branch at Gibraltar, from Spain having been overrun by the French, and to provide for him in it—a proposition which was most acceptable. From the time of entering himself of Lincoln's Inn, before going abroad, until this period, he had indulged in something like bibliomania, and had been a picker up of rare and curious books to a considerable extent. He now resolved to sell off his collection, which had been made abroad as well as at home, and to quench for ever the expensive taste which prompted it. The disappointment of many cherished hopes had, by this time, damped his sanguine temperament, and sobered down much of his natural enthusiasm. Youth had lost something of its irritability along with its golden colouring; and he determined not only to fret less against the bars of the fate that engaged him, but to demean himself henceforward with something more akin to philosophical submission, if not indifference. In this chastened frame of mind, he paid a farewell visit to his native place before setting out for Gibraltar, going to every spot with which his boyhood had been familiar, and even to the churchyard, with the old familiar faces of whose mossy tombstones he claimed acquaintance. "The journey," he himself says, "was, in one respect, not pleasant. I found myself prodigiously changed, and I saw many persons altered by time—changed too, I thought, in character. But the great trans-

mutation of which I was sensible, was in my own hopes. I remembered well how buoyant, even fantastical, they once had been, how luxuriant and blossomy; but I saw that a blight had settled on them, and that my career must in future be circumscribed, and very sober."

The unforeseen accidents which had hitherto thwarted many of his best laid schemes and most fondly cherished expectations, did not, however, cease here. The success of the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula, and his triumphant entry into Madrid, blasted all hopes of success in the Gibraltar speculation. In the leisure which his situation afforded, Mr Galt applied himself to the attainment of the Spanish language; and having free access to the garrison and town libraries, his thirst for reading was amply gratified. Some months were thus pleasantly enough spent; but it was clear that the plan of the intended establishment could not now succeed; and his health had become so affected, that a return to London for surgical assistance was imperative. He considered his taking this step as in some degree humiliating, and for some time he hesitated; but the love of life at length assumed the ascendancy.

Mr Galt had for many years enjoyed the friendship and advice of Dr Tilloch, the editor of the "Philosophical Magazine," and proprietor of the "Star" newspaper, and, under his roof, had revised the proof sheets of his "Voyages and Travels." Miss Tilloch now became his wife, and afterwards the mother of his three sons, John, Thomas, and Alexander.

Unsuccessful as his plans had hitherto been, the thirst for commercial enterprize was not yet completely satiated; and immediately on the restoration of Louis the Eighteenth, Mr Galt visited France, in the hopes of finding some inducements to settle there. With this view, he inspected the cotton manufactories of Rouen; and, after remaining at Paris for a short time, proceeded to Brussels, and thence to Holland. Matters

were such, however, as to offer no flattering prospects of success, and he shortly afterwards returned to England.

It was about this time that Mr Galt contributed some pieces to the "New British Theatre," published by Colburn; and indeed he was, in some measure, the originator and editor of that work. Among these were "The Witness" and "The Mermaid," dramas which particularly attracted the notice of the late Lord Kinneder—a gentleman of distinguished critical taste, and author of the beautiful and well-known continuation of Collins' "Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlands." By his advice, "The Witness," moulded into the form of a regular tragedy, was rechristened "The Appeal," and brought out successfully on the Edinburgh boards. The prologue to it was written by Mr Lockhart and Mr Hamilton, the author of "Cyril Thornton," and the epilogue by Sir Walter Scott.

In 1815, Mr Galt was deeply affected by the death of his early friend and schoolfellow, Spence, for whose scientific genius he had a profound admiration. He always spoke of him as having been destined to a dark fate; in so much as he had passed away from among men without the acknowledgment of his fame, and in the very midst of those researches which were so certain to have ultimately commanded it. The kindly enthusiasm of his disposition was, however, exhibited in this as in many other things. He became Spence's biographer; and prevailed upon Sir John Herschell to edit his unpublished "Essay on Logarithmic Transcendents," which was afterwards characterized by the "Quarterly Review" (No. 94) as "the first formal essay in our language, on any distinct and considerable branch of the integral calculus, which had appeared since the publication of Hollin's papers on the rectification of the conic sections."

Hitherto, Mr Galt had only indulged a strong literary propensity in committing his thoughts, feelings, and observations to paper; but now circumstances almost compelled him, at least

for the mean time, to look upon himself as an author by profession. Whatever he entered into, he did enthusiastically and in earnest; and his vigour did not fail him in this time of need; for great as were the exertions of Goldsmith and of Johnson, when pressing circumstances required, he was excelled by neither, at any period of their varied lives, either in copiousness or versatility.

It is not intended to enumerate here the variety of subjects which employed his pen in the form of dissertation and biography, of tale and critique. In these off-hand effusions, much, doubtless, is of unequal merit. In the shape of first thoughts, many things were poured forth which would have been cancelled on sober review; but throughout them all are observable the traces of a searching and vigorous intellect, of a mind original in its speculations and copious in its resources, and conveying its developments to the world in modes of expression, which, whether acknowledged or not to be always graceful, are assuredly always characteristic. His subjects might be occasionally unhappy—sometimes they were so; but, whatever they were, his mode of treating them was peculiarly his own. Imitation was a meanness to which, as an author, he could never stoop; and all his works, whatever be their comparative merits, have this in common, that they bear upon them the impress of John Galt. We cannot forbear, however, making a passing mention of his life of his friend, Benjamin West, the president of the Royal Academy—a memoir full of discrimination, vigour, and acute remark; and of the “Majolo,” a metaphysical tale, founded on the obscure doctrine of secret influences, which possesses merit of a high and rare kind, and which was always reckoned by himself one of his best but least appreciated works. The delicately beautiful tale of “The Omen,” woven from similar shadowy principles, was, some years afterwards, published anonymously, and attracted great attention from those

whose approbation was true fame. The real author was never suspected; and perhaps, even now, the affiliation may occasion surprise to not a few. It was attributed by some to Mr Lockhart, by some to Dr Maginn, by some to Mr Hamilton, and by some to the late Mr Barry St Leger; and it had the honour of being reviewed and praised by Sir Walter Scott.

Having settled, as it were, in his peculiar sphere, Mr Galt seems now to have banished every other wish, and determined to pursue the even but laborious tenor of a literary life. This did not, however, prevent him from taking a share—and when he did take a share, it was an active one—in whatever interested the public welfare; and he acted a leading part in the formation of the National Caledonian Asylum—if, indeed, the successful raising of the funds for that institution was not almost entirely owing to his enterprize and exertions. Fate, however, decreed his career to be one less of contemplation than of action; and, in the midst of his studious occupations, a proposal was made to him from Glasgow, to procure a London guarantee for shipments to Jamaica destined for the Spanish colonies. This caused him to remove, in 1818, with his family, to Finnart, in the neighbourhood of Greenock; but the change was any thing but a comfortable one. The time hung heavy on his hands; so much so, that he afterwards looked back on the two seasons spent there, as the most irksome and unsatisfactory of his whole life. Before his arrival, Park, his earliest, best, and dearest friend, had just followed Spence to the grave; and, in the vicinity of his native place, he found himself far more desolate than if he had been in a foreign land, and amongst entire strangers.

The death of Park, especially, occasioned a blank which could never be supplied. Their friendship had commenced in early boyhood, and had grown with their growth; and the chances and changes of after life had only tended to knit them more firmly and affectionately to each other. Dissimilar in

their dispositions and temperaments, their very peculiarities seemed to have been turned into rivets of friendship. At school, Park was a clever, an aspiring, and an industrious boy; Galt a heedless, an unambitious, if not an idle one. As their minds expanded, Park showed early blossoms, while Galt had only barren leaves. Even their spheres of life had been chalked out as different; for Park had been destined to succeed his father in domestic business, and his energies of enterprize, if he possessed any, were never called into action. Galt, on the other hand, was early set adrift on the waves of the world; was in youth consigned over to strangers, and was left to fight his unassisted way among them. The genius of the one was characterized by taste; that of the other by power. The one was prudent, calm, calculating, sedate; the other ardent, impetuous, ambitious, speculative—ever discerning flaws or projecting improvements, ever unsatisfied with what it had achieved, and ever striving after some excellence yet unattained. Park possessed one of those mild temperaments, which, according to Akenside, “sighs for harmony, and grace, and gentlest beauty;” while Galt was stimulated by the more daring one, “which pursued the vast alone, the wonderful, the wild.” Yet, different as were their spheres of action and their natures, something like what St Pierre calls “the mystical sympathy in contrast,” or Wordsworth, “a similitude in dissimilitude,” tended to cement them to each other. Galt threw his bread on the waters, in the hopes of finding it after many days; Park wisely eschewed the toils of ambition, and, although he achieved not the renown of a name, he passed a serene and happy life, and died in the town where he was born, esteemed and respected by all who knew him.

Tired of the sequestered and monotonous life which he spent at Finnart, Mr Galt gladly accepted an offer made to him, to proceed to London and take charge of a parliamentary bill relating to the Union Canal Company. During his leisure hours

about this period, he penned his "Historical Pictures," and his "Wandering Jew," a striking fiction, which passed through several editions; together with the "Earthquake," a novel in three volumes, which, although exhibiting occasional passages of power, must be admitted to be very unequal; and which, from its want of nature and probability, failed in propitiating public sympathy.

But a change, and a happy one, was now to come over the character of our author's genius; and it is not a little remarkable, that his next effort should have been distinguished by the very excellences in which its predecessor was deficient. The "Ayrshire Legatees" appeared in successive numbers of Blackwood's Magazine; and such was the attractive popularity of that delightful series of letters, that a paternity not lower than that of Waverley was ascribed to them. Scarcely had the publication of that series of letters commenced, when the late Mr Blackwood, with that sagacity and shrewdness for which he was remarkable, and which made him know, as it were by intuition, not only the intrinsic value of compositions, but their probable effect upon the public mind, at once saw and appreciated Mr Galt's peculiar powers—assisted him by his advice—convinced him in where his *forte* lay—and happily prevailed upon him to go on working the rich original vein which he had then opened. The "Annals of the Parish" resulted from this advice; and, in relation to this topic, we cannot refrain quoting the author's own words. "I owe a debt of gratitude that would be ill discharged if it were not fully acknowledged. Although the 'Annals of the Parish' is much older than the 'Ayrshire Legatees,' it is due to Mr Blackwood to ascribe to him the peculiarities of that production; for though unacquainted with the 'Annals of the Parish,' his reception of my first contribution to his magazine of the 'Ayrshire Legatees,' encouraged me to proceed with the manner in which it is composed; and thus, if there be any ori-

ginality in my Scottish class of compositions, he is entitled to be considered as the first person who discovered it."

In the "Ayrshire Legatees," the "Annals of the Parish," the "Provost," the "Steam-boat," "Sir Andrew Wylie," the "Entail," and the "Last of the Lairds," Mr Galt gave a view of the phases of society in the West of Scotland, such as it existed towards the close of the last and the commencement of the present century. What would we now give for the records of such a chronicler regarding Egypt, Athens, or Rome! It will not do to refer us for the quotidian life of Greece to the scourging satires of Aristophanes, or for those of Italy to the scenes of Terence, or even for those of England to the lifelike reflected pictures of Shakspeare. These are well so far as they go; but how narrow are the limits within which the *scopos* is necessarily confined by scenic representation! The broad, yet characteristic developments of ancient national peculiarities had no delineator, such as England in later days found in Fielding and Smollett, and these have perished—leaving only the physical traces to be guessed out from the relics of Thebes and 'Tadmor, of Memphis and Carthage, of Herculaneum and Pompeii; and what Scott was to the eastern divisions of Scotland, Galt has been to the western. His ministers, his magistrates, his landed proprietors, his merchants, his mechanics, his clowns—are all portraitures, not so much of individuals as of classes; so minutely, faithfully, and graphically reflected, and so imbued with vitality, that although the local circumstances and situations which tended to mould them into their peculiar phases have now passed away, or scarcely left a trace of their whereabouts, they must ever continue to be regarded, not only as pictures of national manners, genuine transcripts of Scottish life, and domestic illustrations of the historical events of a particular era, but as throwing light upon the combinations of thought and feeling to which these events owed their origin—for what is

national character, but the general results brought about by the operation of national peculiarities? Regarded, therefore, in this point of view, these works of Galt can never die. They are full of observation and truth; and they overflow with vitality. They bear upon them the impress of a self-reflecting, and therefore of an original mind. They may have inequalities—they may have faults—they may not be perfect as artistic compositions; but their imperfections are far more than counterbalanced by their excellences; and, to vindicate the reputation of our author, it is only necessary to say, that these books were written by him; and we maintain that no one, either among the living or the dead, could have written them but himself.

It is somewhat singular that Mr Galt should have advanced to middle life, should have written so much, and been so long absent from his native country, before he fell on that vein so peculiarly his own, and from the workings of which his posthumous fame will chiefly depend. We now know, however, that the "Annals of the Parish," that exquisite picture of Scottish character, manners, and feelings, was composed in the leisure of the author's supposed more momentous concerns, some ten or twelve years before the date of its publication; and consequently anterior to the appearance of Waverley and Guy Mannering, to which—so much for imitation—some would fain attribute its origin. Indeed it was, at the time, offered to the publishers of these celebrated works, and was returned to Mr Galt with the assurance that a novel, or work of fiction, entirely Scottish, would not take. This illusion, as all the world knows, was soon afterwards destined to be dissipated; but we readily grant, notwithstanding, that it was far from being an unnatural one. The manuscript, as a thing of little value, was accordingly thrown aside, and its existence almost forgotten by the author himself, until, in 1821, the success which attended the publication of the "Ayrshire Legatees" in Blackwood's Magazine,

recalled Micah Balwhidder to mind; and, having found the chronological records of that pious husband of three wives among a bundle of useless papers, they were rewritten and arranged for immediate publication. The reception which the "Chronicle of Dalmailing" met with, established firmly Mr Galt's reputation as an author; and we mention this anecdote principally to show how precarious a thing may be the achievement of literary fame, and what risking of utter oblivion may have been suffered by works which, to be appreciated, required only to be known.

By the recommendation and advice of his shrewd and intelligent friend, Mr Blackwood, our author persevered in his delineations of Scottish life; and "Sir Andrew Wylie," the "Entail," the "Steam-Boat," and the "Provost," all of extraordinary, although various degrees of merit in their particular ways, were produced in fertile succession. In these, Mr Galt has bequeathed to posterity a faithful record, and rescued from fast-striding oblivion those national manners, habits of thought, and modes of expression, which prevailed in Scotland towards the latter end of last century; and at the era when that great change commenced, by which our ancient peculiarities have ever since then been rapidly wearing away under the polish of English influx. From what we learn not only of rustic life, but of society through all its grades—from the graphic descriptions of King James the First and Fifth, of Dunbar and Sir David Lindsay, in the life-breathing lyrics of Semple of Beltrees, and down through the more modern and scarcely less faithful delineations of Allan Ramsay, more especially in the "Gentle Shepherd,"—it may be safely affirmed, that, for the three centuries preceding the French Revolution, Scottish manners underwent less of change than they have done during the last fifty years; and, if this obliteration progresses at the same railway speed, almost every trace shall, in the course of another generation,

have disappeared. The merit of our author, considered as a mere novelist, is great; but, in this point of view, his reputation assumes even a higher ground, and, to the future illustrator of Scottish history, his pages must ever continue to be invaluable.

The "Steam-Boat," "Sir Andrew Wylie," the "Entail," and the "Provost," followed in rapid succession to the "Legatees" and the "Annals," and each with nearly the same degree of success, although their merits are distinct, and in some points dissimilar. We do not mean at all to enter here into any critical examination of these, or even to point out the relative degrees of excellence in which they seem to stand to each other in our estimation; but would simply remark, that neither the "Annals" nor the "Legatees" can be properly regarded as novels, although in the last mentioned, the various epistles, each distinctive of character, of which it is composed, are strung together in a form which embodies a progressive narrative, and also something of a plot. They were each intended as theoretical delineations of local manners, reflecting realities as nearly and truthfully as possible; and in this their great merit will be found to consist—not in ingenious intricacy of incident, or evolvment of story. The nearest prototype to the "Legatees" will be found in Smollett's rich and rare "Humphrey Clinker," and a less definite one in "Paul's Letters." The "New Bath Guide," and the "Fudge Family," were also poetical forerunners. If, in our previous literature, any thing may be said to bear a family resemblance to the "Annals," the consanguinity will be found to be very remote, as we know of none nearer than the memoirs of "P. P., Parish Clerk," and the "Vicar of Wakefield," that most exquisite of English tales. But in design and mode of execution, all three are so distinct and peculiar, that, however they may provoke comparison, they can never involve the accusation of plagiarism. As distinct as Devonshire is from Ayrshire—

as is the English vicarage from the Scottish manse—so is Peter Primerose from Micah Balwhidder.

In “Sir Andrew Wylie” and the “Entail,” our author has painted on a broader canvass, and embodied a greater variety of materials. In these, also, he has more boldly ventured on the development of a story, and in the dovetailing those heterogeneous incidents from which a pleasant and congruous whole may be constructed. In both he has succeeded in a remarkable degree. He has shown great ingenuity and readiness in keeping up that sort of interest which arises from accumulation and complication of incident, as well as in exhibiting truth and originality of portraiture. The design of Sir Andrew was to shadow forth the rise and progress of a humble Scotchman in the world of London; and although some of the incidents—more especially the episode of the gipsies—may be cited as fully too romantic for incorporation in a tale of actual life and manners, yet the individual characters are drawn with spirit, and the interest is never allowed to flag. Of Mr Galt’s larger novels, “Sir Andrew” has, we believe, been the most popular in England, which is to be accounted for from the larger admixture of English portraiture and manners into the memoirs of that amusing little baronet. Taken as a whole, however, and considered merely as a novel, it is not equal to the “Entail,” which is full of originality, and of more sustained power, more artistically adapted in the connexion of its parts, and more vivid and striking in its pictures of human life. Claud Walkinshaw, and Wattie the natural, are each in his way inimitable, and leave on the mind an impress not easy of obliteration; and old Leddy Grippy was pronounced by Lord Byron as surpassed for truth, nature, and individuality, by no female character since the days of Shakspeare. The Earl of Blessington had a series of pictures painted from scenes in this very striking work; and his copy of

the book, which was lent to the author of Childe Harold, then resident at Venice, was rendered peculiarly valuable from the number of marginal annotations in the handwriting of the noble poet. The "Provost" may exhibit some bolder sketching, and it may contain some deeper touches of pathos, as well as some more ethereal flashes of imagination; but, taken as a whole, the "Entail" is Mr Galt's greatest and most successful work. We are delighted, at once, with its truthful observation—its *naïveté*, its pathos, its descriptive power—witness the storm on the north coast—and with the fine feeling of nature that pervades it, as well as the ingenious adaptation of its parts. Not only was it most keenly relished by the public, without whose sanction literary celebrity, whatever may be said to the contrary, can be only half achieved; but it had more distinctive honours than mere popular applause. It was finely criticized, and received discriminating praise from Professor Wilson; and, by a curious coincidence, it was known to have been thrice read through by Lord Byron and by Sir Walter Scott. Of what book could the same be said?

Mr Galt's fame as an author had now risen to the meridian, but his life was not destined to flow calmly through the channels of literature. From the first it had been one of action as well as of contemplation; and it was at this time again destined to assume a new phase. He received letters from Canada, appointing him agent, along with Mr Edward Ellice, afterwards Secretary-at-War, for such of the principal inhabitants as had claims to urge for losses sustained during the invasion of the province by the armies of the United States. From being a member of the House of Commons, Mr Ellice did not choose to act, and the whole responsibility was therefore, for the time, vested in Mr Galt. After a good deal of verbal communication with the Colonial Office, and correspondence with the Treasury, a personal interview was fixed with Lord Liverpool, at which

Lord Bexley and Earl Bathurst were present, and the business put in train towards a settlement.

In rapid succession, Mr Galt now brought before the public his novels of "Ringan Gilhaize," the "Spaewife," and "Rothelan"—three novels, each very dissimilar from one another, yet each characteristic and illustrative of his genius, whether regarded in its stronger or in its weaker points—besides a third edition of his *Life of Wolsey*, and a critical essay on the genius of Henry Mackenzie.

Ringan Gilhaize is a narrative referring to the days of the Reformation, and supposed to be related by a Scottish Covenanters, as embodying the adventures of his grandfather. It contains some powerful and pathetic scenes, and several delineations of landscape full of nature and graphic effect, and, moreover, is imbued with a colouring original and peculiar; but it did not make that impression on the public mind which the author appears to have anticipated, and which, certainly, to a much greater extent it deserved. The idea of such a work was no doubt suggested to him by the *Old Mortality* of Sir Walter Scott, who, in his opinion, had treated the defenders of the Presbyterian church with a levity less than becoming or just; and it is not so much a novel—a tale of ingenious, complicated, or startling incident—as an attempt to engraft a detail of the historical occurrences from the reign of the Regent Mary of Loraine down to the battle of Killiecrankie, upon a fictitious biography. Hence the lack of concentration in its plan, and hence, also, probably the cause of its comparative want of success. It has more of the chronicle than the novel—too much of embellishment for a historical narrative, and too much of fact for a merely fictitious tale.

The "Spaewife" is founded on a series of historical incidents modified by the fancy of the author to suit the purposes of a novel. It would appear that the life and fortunes of James the

First of Scotland had in boyhood made a deep impression on his mind, and had remained a favourite theme with our author—having at various times and in various ways employed his pen. In youth he had written a ballad connected with it, in early manhood a drama—neither of which have ever been published—and in his maturity this novel. He entered upon it *con amore*; and his extensive reading on the subject gave him a familiarity with it, and a knowledge of the age relating to the transactions he has embodied, which enabled him to execute his task in such a manner as to render his story valuable, even if merely regarded in the shape of an antiquarian essay. Perhaps it shows as much of invention as any other of his many works, and is among the most ambitious of them. Many of its varied scenes are graphic and picturesque—as the execution of the sons of the Duke of Albany—the account of Alexander Stewart in the prison on the Bass—and the description of Loch Lomond in the twilight of a misty morning; but the painting is too Flemish and minute, and we feel as if too many objects were crowded together on the canvass. The quantity of details thus detract from the general train of interest, and we close the book more with the impression of having perused a succession of striking passages, than that these have been amalgamated into a pleasant whole. The work, however, took with the public. It was dramatized by the late Mr Thomas Dibdin; and George the Fourth conveyed his high opinion of it to the author in a kind message. But a still higher honour awaited it in a long letter to Mr Galt, then in Canada, from Miss Edgeworth, in which she commented on the principal characters in a way that showed how much they had interested her, and how accurately she understood the design of the author in their conception.

“Rothelan,” as a whole, is more imperfect than either “Ringan Gilhaize” or the “Spaewife;” but the conception is of a loftier cast, and in several scenes and passages it surpasses any thing in

either. The whole character of Adonijah the Jew, is delineated with a mastery of power; and the pictures of London during the plague, more especially the churchyard scene after the death of Sir Gabriel of Falaside, are full of a sombre and thrilling pathos. The historical parts of the narrative are founded on Old Barnes' curious and quaint work on the life and reign of Edward the Third.

Part of the "Rothelan" was written at Eskgrove; but in its progress Mr Galt was suddenly summoned on American business to London, whence he transmitted to me the manuscript of the remainder; and this circumstance, no doubt, occasioned the hasty and premature winding up of the story. The following extract of one of his letters to me, relates to this subject:—"Having got the literary part of the business which brought me off so suddenly, finished, I have a little leisure, while it is passing the offices, to attend to other matters, and your kind letter deserves the first consideration. I regard myself, at this particular time, very fortunate in having made your acquaintance; and I must draw on your friendship for a little further aid. * * * In this state of things, and it being physically impossible to finish the story of 'Rothelan' to the extent required within the allowed time, I have resolved to add two short tales, which I had postponed for another purpose; and what I have now to solicit is your friendly assistance in revising the proofs. * * * It is still undetermined whether I go to Canada now, or not till the spring. I hope the latter will be the arrangement; for I have been kept in such a constant state of excitement these last twelve months, between business and composition, that I feel myself much in want of repose. If, therefore, I go to Canada, I hope to enjoy a few months' jubilee at Eskgrove." The letter from which this extract is made has no date. The following refers to the same subject:—

“ Wyck House, by Brentford, 14th Nov. 1824.

“ MY DEAR SIR,—Being here for a few days, I only got your letter of the 7th yesterday. It is to me particularly agreeable to hear your good opinion of ‘Rothelan.’ It, however, must strike every reader that the work is incomplete, in as much as I have only considered the hero in his capacity of a page and squire. My intention was, that he should have won his spurs at the field of Poitiers. You have reminded me of a circumstance which I wonder at my own stupidity in forgetting. I ought to have described a scene formed from the poor heroine’s misfortunes; but it certainly, in the hurry of the time and composition, escaped my recollection. If the work come to a second edition, I shall certainly try to give the Manchester calamity.

“The only thing of a literary kind talked of here is the ‘Conversations’ of Byron. The work is a tissue of mistatements, and yet in many points substantially true. I am at present staying with his lordship’s oldest and earliest companion; and I understand that in the course of a day or two we may expect from Mr Hobhouse some answer to points and parts of Medwin’s work. * * * I still count on sailing in January, and on spending at least three weeks, before I go, at Eskgrove. If the commissioners do not sail by the beginning of the year, it will serve no purpose to take their departure before April, on account of the breaking up of the winter roads.

“I have now, before I conclude, to return you my best thanks for the manner in which you have performed that most kind undertaking, both with respect to the ‘Tales’ and ‘Wolsey,’ by which you relieved my mind at a crisis of very great anxiety. * * * I am quite in hopes of being able to leave for Scotland on Tuesday week.—Believe me, very truly yours,

“ JOHN GALT ”

Sick of a life of adventure, and anxious about the education of his three sons, Mr Galt fixed his residence at Eskgrove, near Musselburgh, in 1823. The situation is a very beautiful one, and the grounds form part of the battle-field of Pinkie. To one who indulged so much in the reveries of the imagination, and whose memory was so well stored with historical recollections, it was interesting to find that from its windows Carberry Hill could be seen on one side, and Preston on the other. It was at this time that the author of this memoir became acquainted with him, and a friendly intercourse was established, which terminated only with Mr Galt's life. He was then in his forty-fourth year, of Herculean frame, and in the full vigour of health. His height might be about six feet one or two, and he evinced a tendency to corpulency. His hair, which was jet black, had not yet become grizzled; his eyes were small but piercing; his nose almost straight; long upper lip; and finely rounded chin. At an early period of life Mr Galt had suffered from small-pox, but the marks of its ravages were by no means severe, and instead of impairing, lent a peculiar interest to his manly and striking countenance. He was seldom or never seen without spectacles; but we are uncertain whether the use of these arose from natural short-sightedness, or from the severity of his studies.

In conversation, Mr Galt's manner was somewhat measured and solemn, yet full of animation, and characterized by a peculiar benignity and sweetness. Except when questioned, he was not particularly communicative; and in mixed company was silent and reserved. His answers, however, always conveyed the results of a keen and discriminative judgment, and of an eye that allowed not the ongoings of the world to pass unobserved or unimproved. His learning was more of a singular, than of a general kind; and on many subjects of book-knowledge, he seemed to have struck into the by-ways to avoid the high-

ways; consequently, the results of his reading might rather be said to have been curious than useful. It would be difficult to suppose, from the general tenor of his writings, that he should have been particularly fond of metaphysical or abstract discussions, yet such was remarkably the case in a quiet *tête à tête*. In such he abjured with little ceremony the dogmas of the schools; and he treated his subjects with ingenuity and acumen, not according to what was generally received regarding them, but according to what appeared to him to be their nature and bearings. For the sake of eliciting ingenuity in discussion, he often took up what was evidently the more vulnerable side of the argument, and thus acted on the offensive, to draw out the resources of his opponent in debate. In these gladiatorial exercises he uniformly displayed exceeding tact and address, together with an illustrative invention often quite poetical; although the arguments, when calmly considered, might be, perhaps, too shadowy and substanceless to convey intellectual satisfaction. Something resembling what we mean, may be traced in the pages of the "Majolo" and the "Omen," where the author is discussing the doctrine of sympathies and antipathies—the relation of sound and form—the metaphorical intimations of prophetic reverie—good and evil portents—and the connexion of mind with the physical world. His views, even on practical subjects, were often sufficiently speculative and sanguine—but all indicating a grasp and comprehension of mind, and all tending towards philanthropic conclusions.

Perhaps the great drawback to Mr Galt's prosperity and happiness was the multitude of his resources; and from his being equally fitted for a student and man of the world. As the old proverb hath it, "the rolling stone gathers no fog;" so in the transition from one occupation and employment to another, he expended those powers, which, if long concentrated on any particular object, must have produced great results. Scarcely had

Eskgrove become a literary sanctuary to him, when, from a hint from the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Robinson, now Lord Goderich, that if the province of Upper Canada would undertake to pay the half of its civil expenses, the United Kingdom would undertake to discharge the claims of its clients, Mr Galt was induced to institute enquiries regarding these resources; and, after patient investigation, the result was in the affirmative—more especially after obtaining most valuable information from Bishop Macdonnell, regarding the clergy and crown reserves. Out of these proceedings the Canada Company eventually emanated. To Mr Galt, and to him alone, it owed its origin; and, on its formation, he was appointed secretary, with a liberal salary, and afterwards, by government, one of the commissioners for the valuation of the province.

For this latter purpose five commissioners were appointed—Colonel Cockburn, Sir John Harvey, Mr Galt, Mr M'Gillivray, and Mr Davidson;—and the Romney man-of-war conveyed them to New York. Thence the two first proceeded to Upper Canada, while the two last went at once to the lower province. Mr Galt, by himself, sailed up the Hudson to Albany, where he remained for a few days, and had an opportunity of visiting the governor of the province, the celebrated De Witt Clinton. After inspecting the Cohos or Falls of the Mohawk river, he proceeded to Buffaloe and Black Rock, and thence to Manchester; and progressing by the Falls of Niagara down the American side of the river to Louistown, crossed Lake Ontario, and reached York, the capital of the upper province. Although, during this mission, Mr Galt was in very indifferent health, and his complaints induced great constitutional languor, yet he made every exertion to throw their effects off, and attended daily to the important business of the board of which he formed a part. When the enquiry was finished, the party returned by Albany and New York, whence they took ship to Liverpool.

The Report of the Commissioners was rendered to government, and it was supposed that the objects of their mission had been served, when a new and powerful obstacle interfered, in the corporate clergy of Upper Canada urging the propriety of excluding the reserves. The Attorney-General of that province, who had also just come home, made a strong representation in their behalf; and, seeing the complexion that matters were taking, the commissioners thought it best to apply to the Colonial Secretary, requesting the appointment of a law-adviser, who might decide whether or not they had acted according to their instructions. This was at length listened to, and the business was left to the decision of Sir Giffin Wilson. Meanwhile, the Canada Company, on the suggestion of their governor, Mr Bosanquet, declined to interfere in the dispute; but declared themselves willing to abide by the award. In an able and elaborate report, Mr Robert Grant, afterwards Judge-Advocate, completely established the vindication of the commissioners;—but, before this was acknowledged at the Colonial Office, where it was dreaded that it might not satisfy the Canada clergy, it was resolved upon, at length, to leave the business in the hands of Archdeacon Strachan on the one side, and of Mr Galt on the other, in hopes that, privately, a satisfactory agreement could be made, to which Earl Bathurst and the Company would accede.

A second arrangement was thus completed, even more in favour of the Canada Company than the first; the great tract of land on Lake Huron being assigned to them as an equivalent for the reserves, under an obligation that a third part of the purchase money should be expended in public improvements. The necessary preliminaries for giving the Company effect being thus established, a charter was granted, and Mr Galt was appointed to go to Canada, to make arrangements for future operations.

It was during the period when the controversy between the

Commissioners, the Canada clergy, and the Colonial Office was pending—and when in no very enviable frame of mind, from the apprehension that the Company might even yet burst like a bubble, as many other seemingly feasible speculations had done, and seriously injure a number of friends, whom he had induced to take shares in the concern—that Mr Galt composed the “Omen,” one of the most beautiful, and perhaps the most elaborately finished of his productions. The narrative is sufficiently melancholy in its tone, and “dipped in the hues of earthquake and eclipse,” but it received, no doubt, an additional tinge of gloom from the death, at this time, of his mother, to whom, notwithstanding her peculiarities, he had been always most tenderly attached, and whose approbation had ever been to him a principal stimulus of exertion.

On hearing that a sudden attack of paralysis had deprived her of speech, he hurried down to Scotland to see her once more. For days she had been apparently insensible to all around; but, when she heard his voice in the room where she lay, the powers of nature made a last wild rally; and after a fond, ineffectual attempt to address him, the tears flowed down her aged cheeks—nor did she ever afterwards show any signs of recognition.

While yet in suspense about the time of again leaving England for Canada, and shortly after finishing the “Omen,” Mr Galt commenced another Scottish tale, which in its progress received the name of the “Last of the Lairds.” It was meant to belong to that series of pictures of national manners, in which classes are represented by individuals, and of which the “Annals,” “Provost,” and “Steam-Boat,” already formed the portion of a gallery:—Micah representing the simple-minded, worthy, and pious country clergyman—Mr Pawkie, the shrewd, kindhearted, yet self-seeking municipal ruler of the old system—and Bailie Duffie, the primitive old-fashioned, city-seasoned, and located

merchant. Unfortunately the author was, somehow or other, induced to make the book a narrative instead of an autobiography, and thus deprived it, notwithstanding its general merits, of much of that *vraisemblance*, that apparent truth and nature, which lend such a charm and warmth to the characters just mentioned.

In a letter, dated London, 23d January 1826, I find that it was then in progress. He says, "I am still very much harassed with the Canadian concerns. They are as yet undetermined; but I have been doing a little to the 'Laird,' and hope to be able to send a quantity of it by the next monthly parcel." In such intervals of leisure as Mr Galt could command during the summer, portions of the manuscript were regularly sent down for press to Edinburgh; but, unfortunately, some suggestions of Mr Blackwood happening to prove unpalatable, the composition was for some time suspended. The coolness thus engendered, required something like friendly arbitration to do away with, and, happening to stand in the same amicable relation to both author and publisher, the manuscript was put into my hands for an opinion. From the tenor of the following letter, it would appear that I had tendered one. Shortly after that had been received, and while the work was yet barely finished, Mr Galt was obliged to take his departure for America.

London, 1st October 1826.

MY DEAR SIR,—I consider myself as having been fortunate in making your acquaintance; for although my inclinations have always been literary, yet my pursuits, and the class of persons among whom I have been thrown, have not favoured the predilection. I do not know a single person to whom I could have applied to do for me what you have done, to say nothing of the manner in which the favour was granted. But I shall not offend you by saying more on this head.

I shall be glad, indeed, if the "Laird" gives any satisfaction.

* * * The character of Mrs Soorocks, to which I attached no small importance, Mr Blackwood expressed himself so offended with, that I could not help laughing at his energy on the occasion, for he spoke of her as if she had been an actual being:—I wanted no better proof of having succeeded in my conception. What you say of the Nabob is perhaps just; but then he is requisite. Some such vigorous personage was necessary to be opposed to the “Laird;” and we find but few men of business with individuality enough to make a character of. At one time, I had an idea of introducing in his stead a successful Glasgow manufacturer; but the Oriental seemed to me more picturesque, and moreover there is such a person in R*****shire, so I could not resist the temptation. Beings like Jock and the Laird will not stand bringing out. There is something in imbecility that will not suffer it to endure much handling. The Laird’s character has cost me more pains and reflection than any thing I ever attempted. I began the work as an autobiography, and, after having made considerable progress, threw it into the fire. The station of the Laird in society affords but few incidents, and the selfish stupidity of the person is too offensive in itself to interest. To avoid disgusting, is as much as one can hope for in delineating such a being. I know not if I make myself understood; but I have said enough to explain why there is so little of the Laird and Jock. My object in the work was to delineate a set of persons, of his own rank, that such an obsolete character as a West Country Laird was likely, about twenty years ago, to have had for acquaintance and neighbours; and I hope so far it will be found not altogether a failure.

With regard to those blemishes to which you advert, do with them as you think fit: I give you full liberty to act; carve and change as you please; and I am sure whatever you do in either way will be improvements. * * * *

I remain, my dear Sir, yours truly,

J. GALT.

I think the title of the Laird should be simply, “The Last of the Lairds,” by the author of, &c. By the way, I wish you would write a page or two of deprecatory preface, stating under

what circumstances the editorship came to you. It would oblige me if you would put Δ to it. * * * I leave town on Wednesday to embark. I should have been off this evening; but I have business to transact with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Tuesday, on which day he comes to town, so that I am actually running the risk of losing my passage.

Perhaps a sentence or two may be wanting at the conclusion of the "Laird." If you think so, supply it.

Mr Galt again set out for America, although, from several circumstances which had occurred, he had great doubts as to whether his sojourn there was to be altogether a pleasant one. These doubts proved to be something more than visionary; but after some annoyances upon his arrival, from misrepresentations made to Sir Peregrine Maitland, the governor, and which afterwards shed a malignant influence over his fortunes, he entered upon the business of his mission; and, having seen the charter of the Canada Company registered in the books of the council at York, he proceeded for the same purpose to the lower province, and, having visited Montreal, arrived at Quebec soon before the meeting of the provincial parliament, where he was most kindly and hospitably received by the governor-general, the late Earl of Dalhousie. Here Mr Galt remained for a month, which he has himself represented as one of the most pleasant and varied of his whole life, and received from all classes the attentions which his reputation and character so justly entitled him to. It was only, however, a sunburst 'mid renewing storms.

At this time, I received from Mr Galt the following pleasing and characteristic letter:—

Quebec, 22d February 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am really under very great obligations to you. A copy of the "Laird" having come to the castle from the New York publisher, Lady Dalhousie lent it to me. I observe what you have done with Jock and Jenny Clatterpans, which

improves the dramatic effect. If the work come to a second edition, I will avail myself of the improvement, and write a courtship scene for the pair. I see you have put in Blackwood's story of the watch; but I am not sure of the effect; and I wish the Renfrew uproar had been retained. However, I can trace various points of minor improvement; and I am persuaded that the character of Mrs Soorocks will tell. It would seem by the New York papers that the work has taken there. I have several hints for Canadian tales that may help your muse, which, if my mission is not prolonged, I will bring home; otherwise, I shall send them.

The mirage of the lakes which I have never seen described, is one of the beautiful phenomena of Upper Canada—if that can be called a mirage which is an effect of re-refraction of water. I can only describe it as a double shadow. The islands and shores in the still water hang their heads down in proper and orthodox manner: but there is a shadow of this shadow; and the second shadow, dim and poetical, stands under the first, the tops of the trees touching those inverted. It is said that even third shadows have been seen, the visions of the second vision. I think out of this hint you might discourse excellent poetry. But the steaming of the river and the lakes in extreme cold, is still more full of intimations to fancy. The whole surface is one rolling cloud of vapour. You can discern nothing through the mist; but the sound of simmering, as of some immeasurable caldron, is heard, and all the trees along the shore become gradually, in the brightest sunshine, covered with silvery hoarfrost. You can almost fancy you see the metamorphoses taking place. Another sonnet, if you please, on this.

You recollect Howison's tale of the breaking up of the ice. I have had an adventure which literally realized it. It is the practice here for the country people on the other side of the St Lawrence to cross in canoes, even while the ice is hurling up and down on the tide. I was induced, without duly considering the risk, to accompany a friend who has a country seat on the other side: we had eight rowers in the boat, or rather canoe—we laid ourselves down in the bottom, and were launched like a shuttle in the loom down "the glass brae" of the shore. The

boatmen then began to sing their hum-drum songs; away we went—when a vast sheet, some acres wide, of ice caught us; in a moment out leapt the men—drew the boat on the ice—hauled us over, and launched us in the water on the other side—in they were again, and again at their paddling and singing. This was repeated three times before we landed. In the evening, when we returned, the ebb was running at the rate of five or six miles an hour, and we were caught in a floe, that is, a loose mass of ice. The pieces surrounded us, the boatmen could get no footing on them; fortunately I never thought of the ice that we were in being in motion, but imagined that what was fixed was moving up. The sun was in the verge of the horizon, and the thermometer at more than 10° below zero, and we were drifting away below the city. We were at least five miles out of our course before I suspected our danger—for it is no joke to be frozen to death; at last the ice had the humanity to separate, and we got into clear water under a beautiful cliff of ice, some twenty or thirty feet high, crowned on the top with sparkling stars. The effect of the setting sun on the icicles was more brilliant than you can imagine. It was just dark when we landed.

I am much pleased with Quebec. It is at present filled with Highland regiments, in which I have many acquaintances, and the hospitality of the other inhabitants is also unbounded; for the winter suspends all business, and pleasure is conducted as if it were business. The amateurs have a theatre; and I wrote a piece for them, in which a Londoner, a Glasgow merchant, an Irish girl, a Yankee family, and a Highlander, were introduced. It was adapted entirely to the place, and in *quiz* of a very agreeable custom—of every body calling on strangers. Dr Dunlop performed the Highlander beyond any thing I ever saw on the regular stage. The whole went off with more laughter than any thing I have ever seen; for the jokes being local and personal, (supplied by upwards of thirty contributors,) every one told with the utmost effect.

I am interrupted, and must endeavour to overtake the post. Do be a regular correspondent.—Ever yours, most truly,

J. GALT.

Immediately on his return to York, Mr Galt commenced the active duties of his mission—the objects of which were limited to enquiry, and for accomplishing which eight months were allowed; but finding that between two and three hundred offers to purchase lots of land had been lodged, and demanded investigation, the sphere of his duties being thus enlarged, and the necessity for establishing a system and routine for the future management of the Company's affairs imposed, he was obliged to solicit an extension of this period. Nor can we wonder at this, when we find that even the indulgence of taking a clerk with him from London had been denied him, although the multifarious business of a concern with a million of capital had been left to his sole and unaided management. He was not, however, easily daunted with difficulties; and from what he had observed in the land offices of the United States, to which access had been freely given him, as well as by noting the management of companies and private persons, he had an opportunity of balancing their peculiarities; and, while he avoided what he thought defects, he adopted whatever could be considered beneficial, superadding such improvements as his own active ingenuity suggested. This system has been followed out; and, under it, the Canada Company have attained their present prosperity.

Having at length obtained permission to attempt a settlement, Mr Galt set about commencing operations comprehensively. He caused an inspection of upwards of forty thousand acres of the Company's purchase to be made by qualified persons, for the purpose of finding an eligible situation for a town; and the site where Guelph now stands was fixed upon. The 23d of April, St George's Day, was chosen by him for the ceremony of founding the infant city; and on the morning preceding, he arrived on the banks of the Grand river, at Galt—a township which had been named in honour of himself, some

years before, by his friend the Hon. William Dixon. Early on the day following he proceeded to the spot, some eighteen miles distant, accompanied by Dr Dunlop, equally known to literature and the island of Saugur; and Mr Prior, an *attaché* of the Company, followed by a band of woodmen. When the party reached its destination, the sun had just set, and the silent twilight was darkening over the primeval forests. Mr Galt's own outline of the proceeding is striking enough. "It was consistent with my plan," says he, "to invest our ceremony with a little mystery, the better to make it be remembered. So, intimating that the main body of the men were not to come, we walked to the brow of the neighbouring rising ground, and Mr Prior having shown the site selected for the town, a large maple-tree was chosen; on which, taking an axe from one of the woodmen, I struck the first stroke. To me, at least, the moment was impressive—and the silence of the woods, that echoed to the sound, was as the sigh of the solemn genius of the wilderness departing for ever.

"The Doctor followed me, then, if I recollect correctly, Mr Prior and the woodmen finished the work. The tree fell with a crash of accumulating thunder, as if ancient Nature were alarmed at the entrance of social man into her innocent solitudes, with his sorrows, his follies, and his crimes.

"I do not suppose that the solemnity of the occasion was unfelt by the others; for I noticed that after the tree fell there was a funereal pause, as when the coffin is lowered into the grave: it was, however, of short duration, for the Doctor pulled a flask of whisky from his bosom, and we drank prosperity to the city of Guelph.

"The name was chosen in compliment to the royal family; both because I thought it auspicious in itself, and because I could not recollect that it had ever been before used in all the king's dominions.

"After the solemnity—for though the ceremony was simple,

it may be so denominated—we returned to the shanty, and the rain, which had been suspended during the performance, began again to pour.”

About three months from this date, I received from the newly founded capital of the upper province, the following letter, in which the same transactions are alluded to, although under a different phasis. It also, as will be seen, relates to ulterior operations and wanderings.

Guelph, U. C., 1st August 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,—I wrote you two letters from Quebec, but one of them was mislaid, and has, I fancy, never reached you. Since that time I have been over head and ears in business, and travelling from Dan to Beersheba. In the Quebec letters I gave you for poetical materials some account of a Canadian winter; but the spring is more striking, and I have witnessed one of the most sudden and rapid thaws ever recollected, the effects of which are still in the lakes, which are at this time three feet higher than was ever known. I was on my way to New York when it took place. I left Utica (or as the Americans, *properly*, sparing the profanation of classical recollections, call it Uticky) after breakfast, and the winter had full dominion over fold and flood. About two o'clock the sun suddenly shone with great power; towards sunset the thaw had evidently commenced, and, by the time it was dark, the sound and rushing of many waters were on all sides. The coachman became alarmed, and it was agreed to stop at a farm-house for the night. At daybreak, the scene which the valley of the Mohawk presented, cannot be described. It was an elegant extract from the universal deluge; for leagues and miles the whole country was up to the neck in water, and countless cataracts were pouring from all the hills—not certainly quite so vast as Niagara, but many of them would not have shamed the Cora of the Clyde at Lammas flood. What have the Yanky poets to do with *translating* European descriptions? There was more originality of poetry in the business of that morning, than in all the rhyme they have yet published.

Then the tide of human emigration, which followed as soon as the waters were "assuaged." On the morning I left Albany on my return, every sort of vehicle was in motion; no less than fifty stage-coaches, each carrying nine persons, set out in a string—to say nothing of waggons, loaded with reels and wheels, and pots and pans, and the other needful *et cets.* of an exodus to the wilderness of the west.

I have since been engaged in the interesting task of preparing our caravan for such persons—by laying the foundations of a city at this place—at the ceremony of which, if I had no vultures to *omenate* wars and conquests; thousands of pigeons came in flocks, and a doe with her fawn looked over the river marvelling at the work. The town thrives amazingly. Upwards of a hundred and sixty building lots are engaged, and houses rising as fast as materials can be prepared. The approach to it, on one side, is probably the finest avenue in the world, being upwards of seven miles in length. It is an opening through the forest two hundred feet in width, with a lofty wall of about a hundred and thirty feet high on each side. I almost regret that the progress of improvement will soon deform it with many breaches. By the way, in clearing for a quarry we discovered a neat formed niche in the rock, with a vase like an Etruscan in it, filled with dust and ashes—unfortunately it was broken by one of the workmen.

When I had got my city fairly a-going I then went to Lake Huron, crossing Lake Simco with singing boatmen—a race fast disappearing. The passage of that lake is exceedingly beautiful, but not picturesque. We met in the twilight of the dawn with a canoe full of Indian children, piloted by a negro. They were gliding over the glassy water between us and the waning, like imps and their leader, as silent and as solemn as spirits. I embarked at Portangushire on Lake Huron, in a gun-vessel fitted out for the voyage; and off Cabot's-head I had a fine view, for upwards of four hours, of that rare and visionary reflection of the land in the water, of which no one has given any satisfactory explanation. There were three distinct landscapes or reflections of the scene, visible so plainly that you could not tell which was the real but by the position only.

The voyage itself was comfortless and uninteresting, save for its object. We left the gun-boat at Detroit, and came down Lake Erie in a steam-boat to Buffalo, where there is a hotel that beats the Waterloo tontine or the Regent bridge of Edinburgh (as the Yankees would say) to immortal smash. By the way, the Americans were very civil to us at Detroit. When we entered the theatre one of the players recognized me, and the orchestra forthwith were instructed to play a Scotch air; and between the play and farce the officers who were of the party were honoured with Rule Britannia and God save the King. This was more remarkable as it was on the 5th July, the evening immediately after their grand festival of the Independence. In fact, the king is very popular among them, and you will often meet with his and Canning's portrait in the bars of the roadside taverns.

I am much pleased with the Canadian summer as it shines forth in this province. It is warmer certainly than in England, or rather there are more consecutive warm days than we experience in England; but in other respects the sensible heat is not greater. Of literature or learned men I can say nothing. I have not had a book in my hand, save an old magazine, for the last six weeks; but I am laying the foundation of an academy, the Company having allowed me to reserve one half of the money arising from the sale of the land in the town for that purpose, by which I have already upwards of two thousand dollars in store. I have got a school already opened in a shed—three taverns filled with boarders—a khan after the Turkish fashion, which accommodates eighteen families. I am about to begin a church, having received £100 from the Bishop to begin with. We have a regular mail-coach twice a-week, a post-office, and they speak already of getting up a newspaper and a bank agent; all this since the 23d April, at which time the site of the market-place was in the centre of the wood, some miles from any habitation.—Give my best respects to all friends, and believe me, ever yours, most truly,

JOHN GALT.

I need not say how much you will oblige me by a chit-

chatting letter. When you see Ebony, tell him I shall write him whenever I have another forenoon's leisure. I trust soon to have some respite.

Mr Galt having effectually set the operations for the Canada Company in progress at Guelph, returned to York, and took into consideration a step to which he conceived it was pledged to the government as well as to the public. It had, indeed, been held out to the government that vast advantages would arise to Upper Canada from having an opulent company allocated there, and interested in the promotion of its internal improvements; and it forcibly struck him that one of the most obvious modes of accomplishing this end, was the receiving of payments in produce, and undertaking the sale of that produce on consignment—being of opinion that the commission thereby to be realized, would not only defray official expenses, but give a stimulus to the ultimate prosperity of the province. He accordingly resolved on a plan for carrying the business into effect, and fixed upon the most convenient points for the erection of receiving-houses. A portion of the Burlington Bay peninsula was selected as the most eligible situation for a central depot, and an application was made to the lieutenant-governor for a grant of three acres of land for that purpose, which was at once most handsomely conceded.

The situation of Guelph had been selected from many natural as well as artificial advantages possessed by the locality. Besides being placed on a tongue of land, surrounded by a clear and rapid stream, it stands almost in the centre of the table-land between four of the great lakes—Ontario, Simco, Huron, and Erie—its own stream, the Rapid, flowing at a short distance from the town into the Grand River, which may be said to be navigable from the Bridge of Galt to Lake Erie, a distance of eighty miles. The navigation is continued by the Welland canal to Lake
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Ontario, thence by the Rideau canal to the Grand Ottawa, which flows into the St Lawrence; and, by the Lachine canal, it communicates with Montreal, and thence with the ocean—a series of advantages perhaps possessed by no town in the whole world whose situation is so far inland. From the time of its founding, it has been increasing in buildings and population with an almost unexampled rapidity; and where, ten years before, stood forests undisturbed from the first of time, churches, schools, mills, bridges, and public erections of all descriptions, showed the dominion of civilized man. Roads were opened in every direction through the wilderness, and all the land allotted for the township has been long ago disposed of: and had Mr Galt achieved nothing else, the honour of having founded this, as well as several other now flourishing towns in Upper Canada, would have been sufficient for ever to perpetuate his name, in connexion with the historical annals of that province, as one of its greatest benefactors. Strange to say, however, that from the day he announced the birth of this infant metropolis to the directors of the Canada Company, his destiny, so far as connected with it, seems to have been sealed; and a series of troubles and vexations—may it not be said of persecutions?—commenced, which at length accumulated to a degree that rendered his transatlantic occupations unendurable.

Having matured his plans for the consignments of produce, Mr Galt next proceeded to an inspection of the Company's Huron tract, as noticed in a letter which has been just quoted, preliminary to the fixing upon a location there. This undertaking was entrusted to Dr Dunlop, who assembled at Galt a number of fit persons, and of surveyors, to accompany him into the forest; while he himself proceeded forward from York to Penetanguishine, to embark in a vessel which had been ordered to receive him, for the purpose of exploring that part of the coast which lay between Cabot's-head on the north, and Aux Sables

on the south—a fairy voyage of discovery, of which he has preserved a very striking and picturesque-like journal. The object was to discover, if possible, a harbour for shipping, and to meet at the mouth of one of the rivers the party which had been sent with Dr Dunlop by land to inspect an unknown region, of which one million of acres had been assigned in a tract to the Canada company.

Mr Galt took the road which leads in a direct line to Lake Simco, and made his first halt near Newmarket; where, although the appearance of the country was not very prepossessing, the uplands commanded a distant prospect of Lake Ontario. He then proceeded to a place on the Holland River, called Holland's Landing—an open country, frequented by the Indians and the fur traders; and thence embarked, descending the river to Lake Simco, the boatmen in the stillness of the evening amusing them with those French airs which Moore has rendered so popular under the title of Canadian Boat Songs.

“By dawn of day,” says Mr Galt, “we were informed that the boatmen were ready, and immediately embarked: a vapour lay on the tops of the trees and circumscribed our view, showing enough, however, to remind us that we were in a far country. The mist prevented me from seeing the outline of the adjacent land; but the situation of the house reminded me of Rhuardinnan, at the foot of Benlomond, in Scotland.

“Our progress over the still lake in a fresh and serene morning, was delightful; not a breath ruffled the face of the waters, and all around us ‘looked tranquillity.’ In this little voyage I remember an incident which, at the time, impressed me with a curious emotion. A vast moth as big as a bird flew over the boat in perfect silence. Its course and appearance was not like any ‘creature of the element,’ and my imagination exalted it into an imp of darkness flying homeward.

“We then returned to the coast of Innisfail, on which I had

a grant of land ; but as we had a long voyage and journey before us, we only touched there to speak to a settler who had hailed us as we passed. From him I learned that several clearances, as the cutting down of the timber is called, were then afoot, and a few settlers had recently arrived.

“ Having conversed with him some time, we steered for Kempenfeldt Bay, and had another sight that could only be met with in America—a squaw, with several Indian children, crossing the lake in a canoe, steered by a negro ! My imagination surely was given to dark fancies ; for I could not help comparing the transit of this party in that grey and silent morning with something of another, I will not say a ‘ better world.’

“ We ascended Kempenfeldt Bay, or more properly gulf, nearly to the head, where we met horses with our luggage, which had come through the forest by a track recently opened—a great convenience in summer ; in winter the lake is frozen, and travellers pass on the ice.

“ From the spot where we disembarked, I proceeded along a road which was opened by a party during the late war, under the command of Dr Dunlop, whom I was to meet on Lake Huron ; but the forest glade was nearly again impassable by the new vegetation, and we were obliged to travel it in single file.

“ About halfway to Penetanguishine we were compelled by the weather to take shelter in a farm-house ; and a thunder-storm coming on, obliged us to remain all night. The house itself was not inferior to a common Scottish cottage ; but it was rendered odious by the landlady, who was, all the time we stayed, ‘ drunk as a sow, *Huncamunca*.’

“ Next day we proceeded to the military station and dockyard of Penetanguishine by a path through the woods, which, to the honour of the late Mr Wilberforce, bears his name. Along it are settled several negro families. As I walked part of the way, I went into a cottage pleasantly situated on a rising ground,

and found it inhabited by a crow-like flock of negro children. The mother was busy with them; and the father, a good-natured looking fellow, told me that they were very comfortable, but had not yet made any great progress in clearing the land, as his children were still too young to assist."

Having reached Penetanguishine—the most remote dockyard owning obedience to "the meteor flag of England"—Mr Galt found, by orders of the Admiralty, that his majesty's gun-boat, the Bee, had been placed at his disposal; and on the following day he embarked in her, and bore away for Cabot's Head, the appearance of which most agreeably disappointed him—"having learned something of its alleged stormy features, and expected to see a lofty promontory; but the descriptions were much exaggerated." They saw only a wooded stretch of land, not very lofty, lying calm in the sunshine of a still afternoon, and, instead of dark clouds and lurid lightnings, beheld only beauty and calm.

"Having doubled this 'good hope' of the lakes," adds Mr Galt, "we then kept close along shore, examining all the coast with care; but we could discover only the mouths of inconsiderable streams, and no indentation that to our inspection appeared suitable for a harbour.

"In the afternoon of the following day, we saw afar off, by our telescope, a small clearing in the forest, and on the brow of a rising ground a cottage delightfully situated. The appearance of such a sight, in such a place, was unexpected, and we had some debate if it could be the location of Dr Dunlop, who had guided the land-exploring party already alluded to; nor were we left long in doubt, for, on approaching the place, we met a canoe having on board a strange combination of Indians, velveteens, and whiskers, and discovered, within the roots of the red hair, the living features of the Doctor. About an hour after, having crossed the river's bar of eight feet, we came to a beautiful anchorage of fourteen feet water, in an uncommonly

pleasant small basin. The place had been selected by the Doctor, and is now the site of the flourishing town of Goderich; and which, from being the only port for a fertile country within many miles, and many millions of acres, must, as cultivation progresses westward, become an important location.

"Here we landed, and cheerfully spent the night in the log cottage which the Doctor had raised, damped, however, a little in our hilarity, by learning that the horses, having taken it into their heads to stray into the forest, were at that moment lost to the explorers, and 'wandering up and down.'

"Among other things which tended to make our success in finding a haven agreeable, was the production of a bottle of champagne—probably the first wine drunk on that remote spot; but not for that so remarkable as the cause. In the winter preceding, the Doctor and I returning late to York from Quebec, found ourselves hungry and exhausted; all the shops and taverns were closed; nevertheless, to wait till the morning in a semi-christian land without refreshment was impossible, so we sent out my servant to forage. After ransacking all houses admissible at such an hour, he returned, bringing with him two large frozen herrings and two bottles of champagne. The herrings were soon cooked, and one of the bottles discussed; the other was that which we drank on the coast of Lake Huron, and which, unknown to me, had been preserved for many months for this occasion."

Next day, Mr Galt and his party explored the river in which the Bee was anchored; there they found some

"Green meadows fair with flowers besprent,
Azure and yellow, like the beautiful fields
Of England, where amid the growing grass
The blue-bell bends, the golden king-cup shines
In the merry month of May;"

and, re-embarking on the following evening, sailed down the lake, expecting to reach Detroit on the 4th of July, the great

American festival; but the weather was calm, and, when they got into the river St Clair, the wind was against them, and caused considerable delay. At length, having left behind them the shallow lake of St Clair, whose green banks are almost level with the water, they entered the river of Detroit, the shores of which are among the oldest settled parts of America, and bear a remarkable likeness to those of the Scheldt in the neighbourhood of Amsterdam. Here they saw hundreds of simple Indians with their families, who had come down to receive the annual presents, by which they are cajoled by the white man to quit their native country, and retire before his ambitious policy.

After spending a day or two at Detroit, where Mr Galt had business at the Land Office, the Bee was left to make the best of her way back to Penetanguishine, and the party embarked for Buffalo in the steam-boat, where they landed, after a blustering passage down Loch Erie, at the end of two days. Hence they crossed the swift current of the Niagara river, and, at the hotel near the falls, met with Captain Basil Hall on his return from the southern states.

After this inspection of the coast of Lake Huron. Mr Galt returned to York, whence he proceeded to Guelph, at which Mr Prior had been mean time left in charge of the operations and improvements. Here he found every thing going on entirely to his satisfaction; and, the Grand River never having been sufficiently explored, he caused a scow to be built for descending the stream, and, embarking at the bridge of Galt, names were given to some of the most remarkable islands and headlands in its course.

"The day," writes Mr Galt, "was bright and beautiful, and the trees seemed pleased to see themselves in the clear flowing water. I do not now recollect all the names we gave to the different points. One peninsula, however, that was an island when the snows melted, we called 'Eldon's Doubt;' another

bold bluff promontory, overlooking a turbulence in the stream, we named 'Canning's Front;' and a violent rapid was hailed, in honour of one whom I could not but consider accessory to our being in such wilds, as 'Horton's Hurries.' But it would seem the name was not well taken; for, in sailing over it, a rock in the most spiteful manner so damaged the scow, that she was more than half full before we could get the ladies landed in a little bay, where the water at the brink was only eight feet deep.

"By this time it was sunset, and we had to travel the forest for some distance before reaching a clearing. At last we got to a farm-house of one Walter Scott, who came, of all places in the world, from Selkirk. We stayed with him that night, and as there is a shallow in the Grand River near his house, we called it Abbotsford. We then proceeded to Brantsford, the Indian village, and thence into the purlieus of civilization, from which, by the pretty breezy town of Ancaster on the Hill, I went on alone to York."

Narratives of this kind are not uninteresting, though they seem in nothing influential; for it is, at least, as curious to know from what things, as well as books, a man derives his knowledge. This descent of the Grand River furnished Mr Galt afterwards with the idea of that similar excursion which he has described in Lawrie Todd.

Finding the distance between York and the principal scene of the operations of the Canada Company too great, Mr Galt fixed his quarters halfway between, having for that purpose taken a house conveniently situated at the head of the lake. Shortly after settling in this domicile, a circumstance occurred which was afterwards fraught with the most disastrous consequences. This was in the arrival of a band of fifty-seven emigrants, who had come from New York, where they had been landed from La Guayra in South America—a part of the settlers who had been enticed by the Columbian Company to transport them-

selves to that region, where they had been left to subsist on charity, and were reduced to all the miseries of privation. From Columbia they had been sent by the consul there to Mr Buchanan, the British consul at New York; and that gentleman, being aware of the scheme of a new settlement in Upper Canada, forwarded them to Guelph.

Mr Galt had no instructions to provide for pauper emigrants, and was at a loss to know why these poor creatures had been sent to him, and not to the government of the province; but the emergency of the case, in a humane point of view, admitted not of delay, and he directed them to proceed to Mr Prior, who would give them employment.

From most of them being women and children, of whom all were weak and many sickly, it was found that the earnings of the men were inadequate for their support. Motives of humanity alone had compelled Mr Galt to the course he had taken; and he considered that, although thoughtlessly sent to him, they were in fact under the protection of government, which ought to be liable for their expenses, he retained in his hand a part of the sum payable by the Canada Company to government until the matter should be adjusted. Learning, however, from the receiver-general at York, that the withholding of this money would be exceedingly inconvenient for him, as he depended on the funds, it was agreed that the whole of the Company's liabilities should be paid up, with the understanding that the matter should undergo future investigation. This affair was the source of many misrepresentations; and from the versions of it sent to England, it was evident that Mr Galt had many enemies in the province, on the watch to ruin him in the eyes of his employers at home; and, in an uncommonly short period of time from the occurrence, he received from the Company what he believed was meant to be a kind of reprimand for slighting the local government.

Before this signification of displeasure had been received, it was discovered that the poor La Guayrian emigrants were industrious, and would make tolerable settlers; and Mr Galt, waiving the payment of the first instalment from them on account of their poverty, had assigned them allotments of land, of fifty acres each, at the usual price in the township, on the provision that they were ultimately to pay six per cent on whatever was advanced on their behalf—a provision which has been, to the letter, most honourably fulfilled by them. Scarcely, however, was this business settled, when rumours and hints reached Mr Galt from various quarters, that the directors disapproved of his extensive proceedings at Guelph. To his own convictions all was going on most prosperously, and to his sanguine spirit these effects of insidious machination against him caused not a little chagrin and heart-burning, although he did his best to treat them with silent disregard.

Scarcely had this squall blown over than another succeeded, originating in still more direct misrepresentation; and distinctly proving to Mr Galt, that in Upper Canada “his lines had not fallen in pleasant places.” The 12th of August being not only the anniversary of the birth of the king, but of that on which the Canada Company was instituted, he fixed upon it as a kind of fair in the new town, to bring the inhabitants together on terms of friendly intercourse, and so promote social content and happiness. At the public dinner given in the market-house on the occasion, Mr Galt presided; and after “the king,” “the royal family,” and the rest of the usual loyal toasts had been proposed, the health of the governor-general of the provinces was given, with a grateful acknowledgment of the many personal kindnesses rendered by the Earl of Dalhousie. The next was that of Sir Peregrine Maitland, which Mr Galt prefaced with strong assurances of the alacrity with which his every wish had been met by his excellency; and although this was done at a

public festival, yet, will it be credited, it was bruited abroad that not only had the health of Sir Peregrine been omitted altogether, but that the opportunity had been also seized upon for abusing the clergy corporation? What increased the bitterness of Mr Galt's feelings was, the circumstance not only that all these inventions should be the work of secret enemies—for, throughout the province, he was most popular—but that these “whispers of a faction” should have been listened to by the Board in London.

Add to this, that it had been clearly understood, as an inducement to Government to sell the reserves to the Company, that the transaction was not to be looked upon in the light of a mere stockjobbing concern, but as one by which the province of Upper Canada was to be greatly benefited. Mr Galt therefore made calculations of his expenditure, and equalized that with the prices obtained for land, according to the tenor of his instructions; but although it was necessary, one should suppose, to build the house before receiving the rental, some of the Directors were too impatient to wait until the second instalments became due, and he was consequently charged with having been the cause of lowering the Company's stock. To crown all, he was ordered to change the name of his new city from Guelph to Goderich. This could not, however, be done, from legal transactions having there taken place, without an act of the provincial Parliament; but he called another town, founded about this same time at Lake Huron, by the name of his lordship. “I heard nothing more on the subject,” writes Mr Galt, “and thus a most contemptible controversy ended; but I cannot imagine how a number of grave and most intelligent merchants ever troubled their heads about such a matter. To me

* * * * ‘The rose

By any other name would smell as sweet.’”

In the province itself matters gradually softened down; and Mr

Galt began to imagine that Sir Peregrine Maitland felt persuaded that his political principles were not such as some secret maligners had taught many to credit. What contributed to give additional strength to his belief was the circumstance of his, one day, receiving a visit from Colonel Coffin, the head of the militia department, with an intimation that his excellency the lieutenant-governor thought of appointing him to the command of a regiment, and bidding him turn over in his mind which of the gentlemen in the Company's employment should be recommended as officers. This information was unequivocally acceptable to Mr Galt, not only as it seemed to show that his character had been misunderstood, but as he had already written for his family to leave England and join him. His mind was very considerably relieved by these relentings towards him; and he was beginning to resume his wonted equanimity and spirits, when, in the midst of preparations for an entertainment which he was about to give to the principal inhabitants of York, he received a private letter from London, informing him that, by next packet, he was to be reprimanded by the directors for having insulted the governor; and that Mr Huskisson, then secretary of state, had communicated the complaint of Sir Peregrine Maitland, by Mr Stanley, to the Court of Directors. Nor was he kept long in suspense; for, in a few days, his despatches arrived, and copies of the correspondence with the Colonial Office; and he had the mortification of finding, that, without any opportunity of repelling or answering the charge, he had been assumed as guilty of an offence he had certainly never meditated. Mr Galt naturally deemed this an act of great injustice towards himself, as the whole misrepresentation appeared to have arisen from a letter, regarding the La Guyarian emigrants, to Major Hillier, a construction on which had been put which was equally erroneous and unwarranted.

The consequence was, that Mr Galt sent in his resignation to

the directors, enclosing it to Mr Bosanquet the chairman ; and to evince that the thing was done considerably, and not on the impulse of the moment, he left it to that gentleman either to present it to the Board or not. Indeed, the fact that he believed his family were then on the Atlantic with the purpose of joining him, was a sufficient incentive that this step should not be taken without due consideration. Of course, no more was heard of the colonelcy of militia.

These transactions having taken place towards the end of the year 1827, it was not necessary to commence any new undertakings ; and Mr Galt was thus saved the disagreeable necessity of speaking about his resignation—a circumstance known to no one in the province. Soon afterwards, he received intimation from home, that his family had delayed their departure till spring, but not in time for his preventing their coming out. He accordingly went to New York to meet them, somewhat earlier than was absolutely necessary, and employed his time there in making himself acquainted with the environs, and the manners and customs of the Americans. While in that city he wrote a little dramatic piece, called “The Aunt in Virginia,” which he afterwards converted into a tale, which appeared in the thirty-third volume of Blackwood’s Magazine.

Allusion has already been made to a little piece which Mr Galt composed at Quebec, and which was performed there before the Earl of Dalhousie. That farce was named “The Visitors, or a Trip to Quebec,” and was meant as a good-humoured satire on some of the particular usages of the place. An American family figured as the visitors ; and the piece opened with a scene in a hotel, where a waiter brings in a tea-tray loaded with cards of callers, and the explanation of the initials, having had reference to people many of whom were present at the performance, tended much to make the thing pass off with great eclat. It seems that a custom prevails there to a puno-

tilious extent, of all the inhabitants of a certain grade calling upon strangers and leaving their cards.

This flash of harmless lightning, however, assumed somewhat of a malignant glare when seen from the United States. The drift of the performance was, it seems, hideously misrepresented by some of the newspapers; and it was said that Mr Galt had ungratefully ridiculed the Americans, notwithstanding the distinction and hospitality with which they had received him. It thus came to pass that he promised, when next in New York, to write another farce, in which liberty as great should be taken with his own countrymen. "An Aunt in Virginia" was the product of this promise; and with the alterations mentioned, and a change of scene from New York to London, it was published under the name of "Scotch and Yankees."

To while away the time, Mr Galt made also an excursion into the State of Pennsylvania, where he was received, as at New York, with every mark of respect and attention; and having returned from Philadelphia to the latter city, his family shortly arrived, as also despatches from the Court of Directors, and a letter from Mr Bosanquet, to the purport, that, after consulting with his friends, he had withheld the resignation.

Happy in again having his family beside him, and proud of the reception which, for his sake, they had received at New York, Mr Galt proceeded up the Hudson by a steamer to Albany, and thence on to Canada. His duties being renewed by the receipt of Mr Bosanquet's letter, he was assiduous in his enquiries, as they went along, respecting the American system of settlement. His family left the Erie canal at Lockport, and proceeded to the house at Burlington Bay; and in the summer they removed with Mr Galt to Guelph, as he wished not only to be in the midst of the Company's operations, but as, by fixing the office there, the expenditure of the gentlemen connected with it, which was considerable, might be beneficial to the place.

These few brief months were, however, too sunshiny to last; and, ere removing to Guelph from Burlington Bay, Mr Galt, being obliged to go to Montreal, in consequence of some mistake by an agent in Scotland about a party of emigrants, heard on his journey, that by letters from London it was the opinion there, that the Company could not go on—that the stock was falling. No shock could be more electric; more especially as, at the scene of operations, every thing was progressing most prosperously; and yet the accuracy of the information could not be doubted. The idea immediately suggested itself to him that sinister motives were at work, and that some persons, for ulterior purposes, were interested in beating down the Company's stock. Regarding the mere fancy or the fact of this idea, we have now no means of forming any conclusion; but certain it is, that to him it seemed a clue which rendered a solution of many difficulties easy, and accounted for the else anomalous circumstance, why, as a matter of course, a clique should have been found exactly adverse to his proceedings in the degree of their prosperity.

On his return home from Montreal, his doubts were removed and his worst fears realized; for the accountant of the Company had arrived from England, to act not only in that capacity, but as cashier, and with instructions which appeared sufficiently strangely framed. We add what Mr Galt says on this subject without comment or opinion. "His emoluments seemed to give a perplexing corroboration to the report I had heard in the lower province. They were, in my opinion, greatly beyond an adequate payment for the duties to be performed. And, as the directors complained of my apparent expenditure, I could not but conclude that it was resolved to break up the Company; and that the excessive emoluments of the accountant were bait to lure him out of the way, and to enable him to meet the

exigencies to which he might be exposed when the machination should take effect.

"I call it machination, because I think it was a transaction of that nature; but I confess it did not seem to me to be very heinous to buy the stock cheaper, if no sinister means were employed to lower the price; especially as the effects of the Company in promoting the prosperity of the province were, in my opinion, of primary importance. Provided they were to be continued, I did not care who were the stock-holders; but I could not think, without wincing at the idea, of being father to a wild and ruinous scheme, for such I saw would be the conclusion, if the subscribers were induced to refuse to pay up their shares. They were by this time at a discount, but are now (1833) the highest-priced vendible stock in the market; only seventeen pounds are paid, and the price with the premium is fifty-five per cent, and there has been no change in the system established by me."

The following is part of a letter which I received from Mr Galt, referring to this period; but in it he makes no mention of the difficulties by which he was then surrounded, and which must have been preying on his mind. It bears date, "The Priory, Guelph, U. Canada, 5th October 1828."

"The very desire to write you something more interesting than usual, and to express myself better than in common, for the honour you have done me in Mansie Wauch, constitute the cause which has prevented me from being so long in my acknowledgments. Besides this, during the summer months, my time is so occupied with business that I have no leisure to think of any matter, but only of emigrants, and the tribe and train of vexations which they bring along with them. But however slack or unkind my seeming inattention may appear, I do assure you that I feel the compliment you have paid me less on account of the distinction it has conferred, than as a token of

remembrance. Of the book itself I cannot say more than I did when the first of it appeared in Maga; viz. that I had no recollection of having written it, although it was in my best manner.

“About a month ago, after sending the boys to school in the Lower Province, I brought Mrs Galt to this city, for now it begins to be worthy of the name, where, all things considered, we are not uncomfortable. Our house, it is true, is but a log one, the first that was erected in the town; but it is not without some pretensions to elegance. It has a rustic portico formed with the trunks of trees, in which the constituent parts of the Ionic order are really somewhat intelligibly displayed. In the interior we have a handsome suit of public rooms, a library, &c. But we have only *one* associable neighbour.

“The town continues to progress, and I hope to send you soon, no less than a book from the Guelph press: for a printing establishment is getting up, at which the first official report of the settlement is to be the first production.

“In the course of this summer, another colony has been planted, and a new town, called Goderich, laid out on the shores of Lake Huron. We are busy cutting a road to it through the forest, upwards of seventy miles in length, for nearly sixty of which there is no habitation, nor within fifty miles of the site of Goderich has a house been yet raised. So you see, if you tell me of new books, I can tell you of new towns—and which are the more interesting, I leave Christopher North and the Shepherd to determine.

“It is not entirely void of truth, that I have some intention of sending home, in the spring, a quire or two about Canada. It will not, however, be a history, but notes on different topics, relative more to the actual state of the province than to heretofore circumstances. I expect also, in the long quiet winter nights, to prepare another volume for Blackwood—Tales, in which I propose to describe the history and progress of different

settlers. By the way, when last at New York I wrote another farce, in which an old Yankee character proved effective, without giving offence.

"We have of course no news in the wilderness; but the season throughout has been very wet, and the country generally has been afflicted with some fevers, and we have here felt the want of medical assistance. It is a curious thing that I have had a minting from two poets to come and settle here. It would seem, therefore, that there is a migrating spirit got among bards, as well as birds, contrary to nature—at least songsters never change their climate, unless it be those of the Opera.

"I need not say, that a gossiping letter is here an article above all price; and there is no chance of a glut in the market. Mrs G. desires her kindest regards to you and all our Musselburgh friends."

A dark chapter in Mr Galt's fortunes now followed; but it would be foreign to the principal end of this biographical sketch to more than allude to its generalities. The accountant and he could not get on well together; and, more especially, as the former seemed in many things to claim "a co-ordinate jurisdiction." Added to this, some malign influence at home was estranging from him the countenance and support of the Directors. Determined, however, to follow out his plans, and do what he considered his duty for advancing the ultimate interest of the subscribers, he caused a road to be opened through the forest of the Huron tract, nearly a hundred miles in length, by which an overland communication was established for the first time between the two great lakes Huron and Ontario.

Matters soon came to a crisis between Mr Galt and the accountant. Sir John Colborne had arrived to succeed Sir Peregrine Maitland, and the latter sent a kind message to Mr Galt, that, if he came over next morning to the Government House, he would personally introduce him to the new lieutenant-go-

vernor. This was accordingly done, and Mr Galt, in turn, offered to introduce his brother official, who it seems fired at the proposal, insisting that this ceremony with him ought to have taken place at the same time. A violent altercation ensued; and some threats of complaint to the Canada Company Directorship, as well as implications of surveillance, having been let out, Mr Galt determined to remain in this painful predicament no longer, and so wrote home, by the first packet, of his intentions of immediately proceeding to England, to demand an investigation of matters before the Board.

This step was, for the time, however, rendered impossible; as, on returning from the post-office with the packet which contained this intimation, Mr Galt's servant brought intelligence that the accountant had that morning crossed Lake Ontario, and was off for New York on his way to England. He was, consequently, necessitated to remain for a while to get affairs wound up; but he persevered in his resolution of going home, and immediately commenced his preparations for that purpose, the more especially as rumours about the Company being likely to break up, were renewed after the precipitate departure of the accountant. Strange events immediately followed; and the Directors, without apprizing Mr Galt, ordered the bank at York not to answer his drafts. Mortified at this measure, than which nothing could be more harsh or embarrassing; and, under the impression that the court was sacrificing the interests of the proprietary, he was so exasperated, there being a payment of eight thousand pounds due to the Colonial Government, that he sent Dr Dunlop to Montreal, to endeavour to obtain money from the agents of the Company, or from the correspondents of such directors as were connected with Canada. No success was anticipated in this alternative, and none followed—not a shilling could be raised; but Mr Galt thought proper to resort to it, before having recourse to his last expedient for saving the public

credit of the Canada Company. He had in the bank ten thousand pounds' worth of government debentures, which seemed to have been forgotten by every body save himself. He accordingly waited on the receiver-general; told him how he was situated; and offered, if he would endorse his bills on the Company for the payment to government, to give him security in the debentures. The proposition was somewhat startling; but, being submitted to Sir John Colborne, his consent was obtained. Had it been otherwise, an instant blight would have fallen on an institution so beneficial to the province, over which that able and gallant officer had been sent to preside. "The bill was accordingly drawn," says Mr Galt, "the honour of the Company saved; and the public officers sheltered from the inconveniences that might have attended the sudden suspension of their salaries—the means of liquidating which were provided for in the payment."

By this time Mr Galt felt fully aware that he was destined to be a victim; but he as plainly perceived that the step he had thus taken essentially served the Company; for what would have been the result had it failed in the payment, on which the government offices depended? He knew that the whole of his operations and proceedings had been viewed through a distorted medium, and that a clamour had been raised against these which they little merited. Before leaving the country, he was therefore anxious that what he had accomplished, and what he still planned, should be inspected and reported on by some adequate person. Mr Fellowes, of the Pulteney Office at Geneva, one of the best qualified men in the United States, was selected for the purpose.

After having made an actual survey of the lands allotted to the Canada Company, he states to the governor and directors that "he had the pleasure of expressing his decided opinion, that all the proceedings of Mr Galt and his superintendent, Mr Prior

had been exceedingly judicious, and that the improvements had been indispensable, as viewed in reference to the sale and settlement of the Company's lands." He then goes on to express his belief "that the sales already made had been at good prices, and the cash payments larger than are usually received from first settlers," and concludes with these words—"Upon the whole, I beg leave most respectfully to state to the Company my decided opinion, that Mr Galt's agency has been conducted with sound judgment, and a proper regard to economy and the advantage of the Company; that his proceedings have promoted their best interests; and I believe that the Company cannot more effectually promote their own views than by delegating to him the most ample discretionary powers."

To the powerful and efficient testimony of Mr Fellowes was added that of Colonel Troup, in a letter to the late Lord Alloway, which deserves quotation here:—

New York, 20th April 1829.

MY LORD,—As my friend, Mr Galt, is on his way to England, relative to the business of his land agency in Upper Canada, and expects to visit Edinburgh before his return to America, I have requested him to do me the favour of calling on you with my respectful regards, and informing you that the trust estates under my management are in prosperous train, and promise the means of respectable remittance to the trustees.

From all I have learned of the operations of Mr Galt's agency, I have every reason to believe that he is eminently worthy of the confidence of his friends, and that he has laid a solid foundation for future profits. To realize these profits, however, will necessarily be a work of time, from the extraordinary difficulties ever attending the settlement of wild lands, and from the scanty resources with which the settlers generally commence the cultivation of their farms.

With the most perfect esteem, I have the honour to be, your lordship's obedient servant,

ROBERT TROUP.

Lord Alloway.

As all out-of-door operations are necessarily suspended during the winter season in Canada, Mr Galt was thus spared the necessity of accounting for the cause of the idleness around him; and although aware that his return home would terminate his superintendency, he avoided all references to the subject, and prepared for his voyage to England as if it had only been for a temporary excursion. His Canadian occupations, although not unmixed with troubles and annoyances, had been congenial to his mind. He desired none better, and had no wish for any other sphere of action. To nine-tenths of those around him, he had it in his power to lessen the sum of their evils; and he saw those who had been poor and unfortunate in earlier days, rising, as it were under his fostering care, into comparative ease and comfort—a contemplation which yielded him a vivid delight. His emoluments, also, were handsome, and averaged from twelve to fifteen hundred a-year; but with him, except for the sake of his family, pecuniary considerations were ever a matter of merely secondary interest. No one was, perhaps, ever less what is commonly termed a man of the world, although few knew it better, or have described it so well. His heart always remained young; and he carried the fresh feelings of boyhood into the care-trodden walks of maturer life.

Before leaving Canada, he resolved to pay once more a visit to the new settlement at Goderich, by the road through the forest. His mind was, at this time, in a state of great perturbation; he felt himself slightly and unjustly used; and the loneliness of his journey only added to the melancholy of his thoughts. He took his departure from Guelph alone in a sleigh, and travelling through the endless woods, the chill of whose uniformity was only taken off by an occasional log-house for refreshment, he freely indulged himself in chewing the cud of bitter thoughts. “I felt myself unworthily treated,” he says; “for every thing I had touched was prosperous; and my en-

deavours to foster the objects of my care were all flourishing, and, without the blight of one single blossom, gave cheering promises of ample fruit.

“Profit to the Company, which I saw would come of course, was less my object than to build in the wilderness an asylum for the exiles of society—a refuge for the fleers from the calamities of the old world and its systems foredoomed.”

In the course of this journey, that was rendered more desolate by a heavy fall of snow, which often wreathed itself into impassable heights in the forest glade of the new road, and rendered it necessary for the sleigh to deviate into the woods, Mr Galt was once nearly lost in the wilderness. It was almost midnight, and he was sixty miles within the depths of the primeval forest; while the moonlight only served to show the flakes of the falling snow. “All around was silence,” he says, “and the winds slept even in the branches. We halted, where, by a strange glare reflected from the ground, we seemed in a spacious court of a college, solemn with overshadowing trees.

“To proceed, or to remain till daylight, was about to be discussed, when the noise as of some huge wading animal arose, coming towards us. We had no arms. Presently a hoarse voice, uttering maledictions becoming an Irish bandit, was heard; but that which would have struck ‘terror to the soul of Richard’ in the mountains of Abruccio, gave us courage. The sounds proceeded from teams with provisions going our way, and fortunately they had not wandered; but the incident, which no telling can make awful, was truly sublime. We soon reached one of the receiving-houses, where we stopt for the remainder of the night.”

Having reached Goderich—the township allotted for which was now almost cleared of the trees, and several houses built—Mr Galt took up his lodgings in the same log-house where he

had formerly stayed with Dr Dunlop, when formerly there, in the course of his exploratory expedition of Lake Huron. The lake itself was now covered with ice, and the landscape with snow, as far as the eye could reach; but the cheering changes in the aspect of the locality itself, soothed and delighted him. A strong and growing attachment to the province had taken root in his heart; and it is quite evident, that the necessity for his leaving it caused him many bitter regrets. The day after his arrival was so boisterous and stormy, that the drifting of the dry snow made out of doors exercise impossible; but "the following morning, bright and calm, was," he tells us, "spent in viewing the localities, and the progress made in the settlement; but although not aware that any thing was left unexamined, my eyes were cursory and myself listless; for it was not likely I should ever be there again—and let a man nerve himself ever so resolutely, there is sadness in a final thought, especially if, as in my case, it be attended with regrets and darkening prospects. Indignant reflections may appease farewell, nor was I without that acrid palliative.

"The Canada Company had originated in my suggestions; it was established by my endeavours; organized in due disregard of many obstacles by my perseverance; and, though extensive and complicated in its scheme, a system was formed by me, upon which it could be with ease conducted. Yet without the commission of a fault—for I dare every charge of that kind—I was destined to reap from it only troubles and mortifications, and something which I felt as an attempt to disgrace me."

Soon after his return to Guelph, Mr Galt openly announced his intention of leaving for England, although he deemed it impolitic to give the same publicity to his fears of a scheme, hatching somewhere, for the purpose of breaking up the Company. On the morning fixed for his departure, the inhabitants

assembled in front of his house, and presented the following address, which could not fail to have been exceedingly gratifying to him :—

“SIR,—We, the undersigned inhabitants of the town and township of Guelph, learning that you are about to leave us, beg to express our sincere regret that we should be deprived of your presence, and the satisfaction and pleasure it has ever afforded us. We trust and hope that your absence from amongst us will not be of long duration, and that you will accomplish the objects of your journey, whatever these may be. We would wish to express to you the obligations which you have conferred upon us, in the prosperity which has flowed upon us ever since we became united with you and the Canada Company—many of us having come here in dependent circumstances, who are now in a fair way to become independent, and all having improved their condition under your fostering care. By the measures you have adopted, our lands in many instances have, in the space of eighteen months, doubled or tripled their value; and we do not look on our obligations as the less, that the Canada Company has shared in the advantage. You have set an example to the province in the formation of proper roads and bridges, and showed by what means the progress of the settlement of the colony can be accelerated an hundred-fold by your measures, which have created this town and township. Finally, we beg you to accept of our best wishes for your happiness and prosperity, wherever you may be; and we request you to thank the Canada Company for all the benefits they have conferred on us, and the greatest of these we consider their having sent you amongst us.”

(Signed by 144 heads of families.)

Before leaving this subject, whose untoward results went so far to blast all Mr Galt's hopes of future prosperity, we owe it to

his character to prove, from ample materials which are extant, that his treatment throughout was a species of persecution. But the progressing success of the Canada Company itself, is a practical demonstration of the soundness of his views, which renders any thing like what might be construed into special pleading for him unnecessary. It may be said, however, that the now flourishing state of the Company has been owing to ulterior operations. To knock, therefore, this last landing-place for apology from under the feet of Mr Galt's revilers, we subjoin the following extract from "Three Years in Canada" by Mr Mactaggart—the superintendent under whom that gigantic work the Rideau canal was formed—premising that his volumes appeared in 1829.

"Mr Galt deserves great credit," he says, "for the invention and management of the Company. In this he has shown a genius that is rarely excelled. He organized the whole management of business, and displayed all that tact and diplomacy which his superior talents qualify him for in such an eminent degree. He appointed surveyors and other people to look after the Crown Reserves in the various townships, that they might be disposed of to the Company's advantage. But these reserves were not found to be of utility, as nothing like a system of settlement could be employed in relation to them, lying as they do scattered up and down the townships. However, their sale will be much in the favour of Canada, and tend much towards its improvement; for as they lay like uncleared specks amid a cleared country, they injured the progress of the settlements. On many of these reserves, *squatters* had taken up their abode—a class of poor people, who, having wandered from home without the means of becoming regular landholders, are glad to find patches any where in the woods whereon they may subsist. To these unfortunate human beings, and, in truth to all, he showed much tenderness, which has assisted to raise the just popularity he at present enjoys. He did not drive the squatters off the

Company's lands, as many would instantly have done; but sold them to the advantage both of the Company and the squatters, considering the little *clearings* they had made as *uncleared* forest. By doing this he has established a class of people in the townships devoted to the interest of the Company, who will neither despoil, nor allow to be despoiled, those valuable woods, which may yet come to good account, on the reserves. Nevertheless, there were some in Upper Canada who continued to view the exertions of the Company with jealous eyes. These were they who found themselves unable to *pluck* the poor settlers before they got upon their lands, in the shape of *fees* or what not. They found the Company established the settler in a twinkling, without putting him to the galling trouble and expense of hanging about office doors, receiving rebuffs from conceited clerks, and getting their purses lightened into the bargain. Were it for nothing else but this circumstance alone, the Canada Company will be respected: when we find the distress of mankind alleviated in any degree, petty tyranny and pride laid prostrate before justice and humanity, it is enough for our affections to become attached; we want no more."

In short, we see that all those competent to judge of the propriety or impropriety of Mr Galt's mode of management, have given it decidedly in his favour; and it is painful to think that the directors of the Canada Company should, upon grounds now known to have been incompetent, have expressed their dissatisfaction without a shadow of plea, except that he was not fast enough in wringing money from the settlement, which, in plain fact, would have been totally preventing its ever rising into prosperity. Of Mr Galt's general talents and habits of business, there never was a doubt expressed; and that he was most ungratefully dealt with, has long since been the almost universal impression. Would that the conviction had come in time! It is now too late!

Leaving Guelph for the last time, Mr Galt proceeded on business to York, where he saw Sir John Colborne, who had the kindness to write favourably to the Secretary of State respecting him, and thence, crossing the lake, arrived in the United States. From New York he took ship to Liverpool; and on reaching England, there learned that the Company was to be broken up, and its inability to go on announced.

At London, he could not at first receive satisfactory information from any of the directors who were his private friends, and he therefore determined to be present at the first meeting of the proprietors; but, instead of any opportunity of vindication or explanation being afforded, the whole character, effect, and importance of Mr Galt's Canadian operations were skilfully kept out of view, and simply the general balance of his accounts stated. The impression meant to be produced from this mode of procedure evidently was, that the expenditure had been lavish and inconsiderate. Yet, after all, what did this amount to? Four thousand pounds had been allowed for the township of Guelph, and this had been found inadequate for necessary purposes, by something under seven hundred more. "The head and front of offence had been this, no more;" and let it be added, that the settlement at the time, instead of being an unfortunate one, was prospering beyond even the most sanguine expectations. The *fama* occasioned by this general meeting was next to conclusive; and from private sources it was ascertained that some negotiation was going on between the Company and the Government for the latter taking back the lands. There was some idea that particular parties might step in and purchase them; but this Mr Galt resolved to prevent, if possible; and he did his utmost to remove the sinister misrepresentations which had been made, by exhorting his particular friends on no account to dispose of their shares.

Having ascertained the effect of Sir John Colborne's letter in

the Colonial Office to be very satisfactory, he next day solicited an audience of Sir George Murray, then secretary of state, and represented to him his opinion of the Company. The result was as might have been anticipated, and was a deathblow to all private machinations. Sir George Murray communicated to the Court of Directors the willingness of Government to resume the lands—and by so doing they were at once brought to their senses.

Shortly after his arrival in London, I received from Mr Galt the following letter. Probably much of what I have just stated had not then come to his knowledge, or he did not care about minutely entering upon the subject with me, and the want of funds was the only generality he could conveniently employ.

Canada House, London, 14th July 1829.

MY DEAR Δ,—I have just accidentally heard that you have placed yourself in the situation of adding to your happiness or your cares. I hope it is unnecessary for me to say that I most truly wish you every felicity, and that Mrs M—— may be an equal partaker.

I was much obliged by what you did for me relative to my Company concerns. The truth has come out. It was not alleged headstrongness on my part that has been the cause of what has taken place, but the want of funds to carry into effect the operations in the manner proposed originally by me, and to which the Government was so reluctantly brought to accede. It was a weak policy to seek for fault in my proceedings, when the reduction of my emoluments was found to be indispensable; but the same policy has been acted upon, I understand, towards Dr Dunlop. He was recalled on the pretext of some political indiscretion; but the sentence has been revised, and he has since been placed on the better footing of being served with a notice to quit, on account of the necessity to economize.

I have brought here with me a great mass of book-materials, the fruits of my solitary *noctes* in the Canadian wayside taverns. Part of the “Landlady” I have sent to Blackwood, leaving it to

himself to publish in the "Magazine" or otherwise. This has been forced upon me by the manner in which the fair copy and rough draft have been made up by my clerk—the series of the chapters having been broken in such a manner that I shall have many pages to re-write.

I have heard no literary news since my return, being engaged in wading through the Company's accounts. The labour of this is, however, now nearly over, and then I shall betake me to my papers. My arrangements on leaving Canada were for my being back early in October; but that is now out of the question: nor, indeed, would I go again in the Company's service, without more discretionary powers being allowed me. The attempt to manage so complicated a concern by instructions from London was too absurd; and nothing but the enjoyment I had in the work of improvement could in any degree compensate for the vexations of the last eighteen months. I shall be glad to hear from you.—Remaining always truly yours,

JOHN GALT.

The effects of this mode of procedure on the part of the Canada Company directors were, as it might have been expected, sufficiently disastrous in respect to Mr Galt's fortunes. No sooner was his recall made known, than application was made to him for the immediate settlement of whatever debts he owed, and more especially by Dr Valpy of Reading, to whose care the education of his three sons had been entrusted. The Doctor being an old personal acquaintance, Mr Galt calculated on some leniency on his part, until he could "set his house in order" after this so sudden derangement; but it "was not so written in the bond;" and a formal demand by the Doctor's solicitors showed that none was to be granted. An arrest was the consequence; and, however harsh it might seem, Mr Galt felt that the step was perfectly legal—

"The law allows it, and the court awards."

We now use his own words at this gloomy crisis of his for

tunes :—" As I had by this time ascertained that, independent of a security given for my chief debt, and several farms in Canada sufficient for the others, I was only embarrassed about the arrears of an annuity of three hundred pounds, that though irregularly paid, I had long counted on, I saw what was in my power ; and pride was appeased by the consideration that I had always made more than I expended, and that it was entirely owing to others not fulfilling their engagements to me, I had ever suffered any perplexity in money matters."

It is needless to say how deeply these occurrences affected Mr Galt's mind ; nor is it to be wondered at, if we consider that he was now advanced to middle life, and that all the herculean exertions of by-past years had been hitherto unavailing even to land him on the shores of competency. But, although thwarted and depressed, he was determined to battle on with his fate, and not to sink under it. " I felt my independence augmented," he says, " by looking on poverty, undismayed at her emaciation. I had, however, 'given hostages to society,' and was no longer at liberty to consult my own wishes, and therefore immediately began to build a new scheme of life, in which the secondary condition of authorship was thus made primary. This winding up of my philanthropic dream is stated with as little emotion as possible, but it was not so felt."

To his desk he accordingly went, doggedly with a resolution to devote himself to the pursuits of literature ; and as a proof that he morosely smarted under the change in his situation, he would not even renew any acquaintance with former associates, unless some friendly demonstrations were made on their part. Under these circumstances, and in this state of comparative isolation, "Lawrie Todd" was produced—a work *sui generis*, and highly characteristic of its author, whether we look to its beauties or its blemishes.

The idea of the work originated in Mr Galt having met, in

one of his American excursions, with Mr Grant Thorburn, a seed-merchant in New York, well known there from his singularities, and from his peculiar belief in the manifestations of a particular providence. The opening of it was sketched from a kind of autobiography, which Mr Galt obtained from him, and which served as a starting-point for the development, in more expanded scenes, of a character at once natural and original. As a work of fiction, "Lawrie Todd" has great and various merits, and is entitled to take its place beside the "Annals of the Parish." Yet no two works can be more unlike. The lot of Micah Balquhider is cast amid the materials of a society moulded in their habits of thought by old associations. Unambitious generations have, one after another, arisen on the same spot, been educated in the same school-room, have inhabited the same dwellings, worshipped in the same kirk, and passed away to the same churchyard. The son has been only the revival of his father, in a newer, if not a more improved edition; modes of speech and habits of thought, have, like the cut of the outer garments, been bequeathed from generation to generation, and that quiet by-lane of the world has escaped all the whirl and change of the highway. Not so in Lawrie Todd. We have there society stirred up from its bottom—its ancient bonds of cement broken up, and its elements seeking new combinations. Man appears like a migratory animal, freed from the influences of local attachment, and life a strange panorama of vicissitude. In the former work we are tethered within the bounds of a Scottish parish; in the latter we are left to roam through the trackless mazes of an American wilderness, as yet undisturbed by the axe of the woodman. Yet both pictures are admirable in their opposite styles, and glow with the lineaments of truth. With the old clergyman there seems to be only two divisions in the world, the one consisting of his own parish, and the other comprehending the rest of mankind—another version of China

and the Barbarians; and the same things at hand bear a very disproportionate size to the same things afar off. But how different with the settler in the woods! His mind, although naturally of no very elevated cast, is made to expand under the influence of surrounding circumstances, until even his narrations—although veiled in humble imagery—assume a tint at once poetical and imaginative. The interest of the “Annals” is more genial; it is full of

“Home-bred delights, and heartfelt happiness:”—

man and his occupations—his thoughts, and feelings, and affections, his joys and his sorrows—are every thing; that of Lawrie Todd is compounded of other elements. Instead of appearing the lord of the external world, man is represented by an isolated band of beings seeking a domicile amid the princely dominions of nature; and the wilderness is delineated as stretching its sheltering arms over a few straggling and defenceless wanderers.

“Lawrie Todd,” says Mr Galt, “was written after my return from America, and may be considered as the beginning of that new series of publications, in which the disposition to be didactic was more indulged than I had previously thought could be rendered consistent with a regular story. But the misfortune is, that the lessons taught by the instances of the book are altogether disregarded, and it is only valued for the amusement it gives. But of this it is needless to complain—nor do I complain—for the reader has the privilege of considering what is before him as he chooses. The bee gathers honey or wax from the same flower. But it is a little irksome to observe those things noted as omissions, which were never intended to be given; and those lessons overlooked, to which the author attached most importance. It is this that makes me regret that Lawrie Todd is considered so much as a mere pastime novel.”

In our opinion, this remark of Mr Galt is somewhat uncalled

for, as the circumstance it deplores is neither new nor wonderful. The narrative is one of fictitious events, however much the materials from which these have been framed, are worked up into the semblance of reality. Those who have opportunity of comparing the imaginary operations described with those of actual emigrants, will ever be best able, of course, to do justice to their accuracy. As to the utilitarian part of the argument, it is enough to say, that all men are willing to be amused, and few to be instructed. "Lawrie Todd" is a popular work of fiction; and we are willing also to believe that it contains many useful facts.

The zeal and industry with which Mr Galt, at this period, applied himself to his literary pursuits, was most unremitting and assiduous. In a letter from him, dated 27th January 1830, he writes me in reference to "Lawrie Todd"—"I send you with this a copy of my American story. As the matter is new, I shall be glad, at your convenience, to hear your opinion of it;" and in another, bearing date 26th of the month following, he says, "I was much gratified last post by receiving your kind letter. I had previously seen your review of 'Lawrie Todd,' with which I am, of course, greatly pleased; for, believing you to be a conscientious critic, I assume that you delivered a conscientious opinion. * * * I have gone to press with a new novel, in the construction of which I am in hopes you will find some novelty; it being formed on a simple straight-forward plan, as much so as the 'Iliad' itself. It is, in fact, a drama, with explanatory notes interwoven."

The novel here alluded to, was entitled "Southennan"—a work in which Mr Galt attempted to embody the scenes and fancies of his youth, and to depict the customs and manners of Scotland in the reign of Queen Mary. This was a subject for which he considered his mind peculiarly adapted, having for several years in early life devoted much labour to the acquire-

ment of an accurate knowledge of our national antiquities, and as he determined in its execution to confine himself strictly to that rule of art which requires from the historical painter not only correctness in costume and character, but precision in the exhibitions of still life.

Materials for six volumes having thus issued from Mr Galt's pen within as many months—not reckoning a variety of contributions to periodical literature—it is no wonder that he not only felt somewhat tired of composition in the mean time, but that his health should be somewhat impaired, alike by disappointments and over-exertion. He was also living a secluded and solitary life, his family having not yet returned from Canada.

While in this state of drowse, a sort of moral-galvanic energy was imparted to his faculties by a proposition from Messrs Colburn and Bentley, that he should undertake to write the life of Lord Byron; and as, according to the proverb, “it never rains but it pours,” he had scarcely entered upon this task when he was waited upon by Mr Lockhart, accompanied by Mr Murray of Albemarle Street, to ascertain if the editorship of the “*Courier*” would be agreeable to him, as that it might probably be obtained. A visit from Mr William Stewart, the proprietor, was the result, and the appointment took place. We cannot allow this opportunity to pass, without mentioning that Mr Galt ever retained a very grateful recollection of the continued friendship which Mr Lockhart showed him in these days of his adversity.

However desirable for him, in point of pecuniary emolument at the time, the situation was an uncongenial one for Mr Galt, and not in accordance with his habitudes and feelings. He had been all life long a Tory, while the great majority of his influential friends had been Whigs; and politics were ever with him a matter of secondary consideration. He could not enter into the arena heartily; and after a short trial, during which, how

ever, the circulation of the paper, it should be mentioned, steadily maintained itself, he tendered his resignation.

In a letter to me, dated Courier Office, London, 28th June 1830, Mr Galt says—"I sent you a paper on Saturday with the particulars of our bustle here, occasioned by the death of the king. It was not in my power to write, which I regret the more, as I was anxious to explain to you a circumstance which has vexed me. Knowing your friendly wishes towards me, I was desirous that you should have one of the earliest copies of 'Southennan,' and before any notice was taken of it publicly; but I have been thwarted by a review of it appearing in the 'Athenæum.' The publication has not yet taken place. I will send a copy as soon as I can procure one. My chief object of solicitude being to obtain your opinion, please write as soon as you have read it through."

Of the next letter which I received from Mr Galt, the following are extracts, and more fully explain matters at this time:—

29, Half-Moon Street, London, 10th July 1830.

MY DEAR SIR,—I think it was on the day after I wrote you last, that I received your esteemed packet. How it was that I neglected to tell you of the return of my family is inexplicable, for you are a frequent topic with the boys; some of them are now writing to go with this parcel containing 'Southennan.' I could only get it last night. There are mysteries in all trades; and the delay that has taken place in publishing this book, is one of the bookselling. I shall be glad to hear what you think of it. As it treats of characters of which every body has formed an opinion for themselves, it will, I apprehend, be liked or disliked, according as it falls in with the reader's predetermined notions.

The editorship of the *Courier* did not suit me. It required much more time than I could afford, and incurred responsibilities of opinion, that I was not prepared for. Accordingly I took occasion to beg off; and this has been my last day. I do

not wish, however, that any cause should be assigned, especially as the connexion is not entirely broken—though the public part is at an end. * * * I shall again have a little more time than I have had of late ; but, as soon as I can, I propose to go to Cheltenham for a week ; for the recent close application has rather marred my recovery. I would probably have gone to Scotland, but the nature of some of my engagements against time will prevent me this summer.

“I am proceeding with Byron’s Life, and will send you an early copy. It will, according to my own ideas, be a curious work ; as I have traced, in a vast number of circumstances, the origin of thoughts, incidents, and descriptions in his best works. You will be surprised to see how little invention has been used, and yet how, by the mere force of genius, he should have rendered matters of fact so poetical.” * * * *

The complaints here alluded to, proved to be rather of a serious nature at the time ; and gradually ended in confirmed bad health. I remember of Mr Galt telling me, that, shortly before leaving Canada, he had one day stumbled, and received a severe shock on the spine from the root of a tree ; but, saving a little pain at the time, and consequent local debility, no other effects seemed to have been produced. On his return to London, however, a few months after, various symptoms of nervous disease manifested themselves ; a touch of paralysis followed ; and, in walking, he felt as if a weight had been attached to the feet. Although these circumstances are not explicitly mentioned in the foregoing letter, it was at this period that it was written ; and, on the week following, he went down to Cheltenham, where, though he felt some improvement, it was not such as to render him insensible that the demon of disease still clung to him. “I could, indeed, no longer equivocate to myself,” he said, “that the afternoon of life was come, and the hour striking. The consciousness of having overpast the summit of my strength, was not, however, so obvious to others as to myself ;

and thus, though I suffered what the school-boy called an ‘all-overishness,’ I had no particular symptom that could be described: some relaxation was, however, recommended, of which I would have gladly availed myself; but it is not in my nature to be long at rest, for I have ever found my truest repose in a change of employment.”

It was under these circumstances of depression and ennui that the Life of Byron was written—a work which, whatever be its merits or defects, strongly attached itself to the public mind, and remained extensively popular. Many things in it called forth censure, for it treated its subject fearlessly and uncompromisingly; but, for whatever Mr Galt advanced, he gave his reasons. He was not entitled, therefore, to be attacked in the coarse and rude strain which some periodical critics employed towards him. Sir John Hobhouse also erected a battery of correspondence, from which he fired half a dozen shots much more furiously than effectively, and Mr Moore flourished the satiric lash with his usual smartness; but his verses, however much calculated to annoy the biographer, in no degree tended to show that his strictures were incorrect. It never had been Mr Galt’s intention to write a mere *elogé*; and while he said all that he conscientiously could in the poet’s praise, his duty to society demanded that he should not hold him up as a paragon of virtue, as

“The faultless monster which the world ne’er saw.”

It appeared evident to him, that the adulation which had been paid Byron, had not been propitious to the growth of his moral powers; and he hazarded the opinion, that “had he not been possessed of genius he might have been a better man.” This may be doubted, we think, and reasonably; but it should not be mixed up or confounded with any supposition, that Mr Galt undervalued Byron’s intellectual powers. On the contrary, he dis-

tinctly says, "That he was a splendid poet I most emphatically allow, but those admirers do him injustice who praise him too rankly; but perhaps the very brilliancy of his talents made his faults conspicuous."

In a letter of 21st September, I find him thus alluding to the reception of his biography:—"I did expect that my account of Byron would provoke adversaries among those who did *not* know him. Perhaps I spoke of him as well as I could, and the detached anecdotes are a proof that I wished to say no ill of him. Your observations in the 'Edinburgh Literary Gazette' are well-timed and to the point; but why am I an object of malicious satire or criticism? The thing is to me somewhat inexplicable; for who can say that, either in life or literature, I have ever afforded him reason to complain, that I wilfully meant him wrong?"

No one, who had ever been so long before the public as an author, and on so many occasions and subjects, was perhaps ever better entitled to put such a question than Mr Galt; for his heart was one overflowing with benevolence, and quite incapable of acerbity; and, even at the height of his reputation, he forgot not the difficult degrees by which he had ascended to it, and was always ready to hold out a helping hand to a younger aspirant. It was to be lamented that the fierce invectives in which some gentlemen of the press at this time indulged, were not the less unfelt, from the state of Mr Galt's health.

"I do not get well," he adds in the same letter, "but I think on the whole am somewhat improved, and I am much inclined to resume my plan formed before the Canada Company. Mrs Galt and I have had several conversations; and among others about Inveresk being our place of rest, provided we could find a spot to our liking there. I have no capital, but I can with health count on an income of at least a thousand a-year; and if that will do I would again retire. Give me your opinion freely

on this subject, and say what you think about it. I am paying two hundred and fifty guineas for our house here, and I see that I might save a hundred;—if I took an unfurnished one, a great deal more. I have long been more chagrined than occurs to those who think my equanimity of spirits a true sign; and I can hope not to be better than I am. While in my station, I have nothing that would justify me in complaining. I will be glad to hear from you on the subject of this epistle.”

In another letter of the same month, he thus alludes to the state of his health—“Bating my nervousness, I suffer nothing while at my desk; but the world runs round about when I move, and I often reel like a personage that has taken too much. I am myself persuaded that it all arises from the stomach, and that the head affection is only symptomatic. The transit from activity to absolute sedentary employment accounts for all. In other respects my health is quite well; but, though I have said nothing, I fear that it will be necessary to go a short distance from town, that I may be obliged to walk.”

Being, towards the end of the next month, (October,) on a visit to the Right Hon. Edward Ellice, at Hoarsley Park, he thus once more alludes, in a letter to me from that place, to the subject of Byron—“The battle still rages about Byron; and it was well I did prepare myself for such an issue, although the conduct of more than one has been to me inexplicable. Notwithstanding all the clamour, however, being on one side, the book is already in a third edition, nearly ten thousand copies being sold. I am with an old friend of his lordship; and his cousin, Mr H——n, seems to think I have chosen the only proper course in treating of his waywardness.”

Other passages from the same letter are worth quoting—“It is curious enough, that although from my youth upwards I have ever been a Tory, yet all my personal friends among the *magnates* are Whigs, or Whiggishly inclined. * * * I fear my

Scottish predilections must be abandoned ; for although now more my own master than I ever was before, the boys are coming fast forward, and their inclinations seem to require me to remain here. * * * You will see I have taken some share in the 'slave question;' only, however, to urge the propriety of previously deciding the owner's claim for indemnification, before considering the ultimate tendency. The West Indians made a proposal to me to write for them ; but as I saw it was to advocate only their notions, I declined it. Early prepossessions have urged me into the course I have taken, and I intend to persevere."

Mr Galt was at this time engaged on his "Lives of the Players," a work certainly more of compilation than of original reflection, but withal so amusing, that I wonder it has not attracted a greater share of popularity. The difficulty must have been in reducing such a mass of heterogeneous materials into any thing resembling a uniform style of composition. The biographies themselves are only an illustration of the saying, that "truth is strange—stranger than fiction."

Notwithstanding his broken health, and notwithstanding the number of volumes which had proceeded from his pen within a few months, such was his indefatigability, that on the 30th December he thus informs me of the preparation of another work of fiction—"During the dull weather, I have been again busy," he writes me, "with another novel, which is now printing. It is a Glasgow story—'Bogle Corbet, or the Emigrants,' and I think, in some respects, it will be among my best. It is an autobiography in the better sphere of life, and I have endeavoured to throw into the story every incident calculated to illustrate both the sept it belongs to, and his own individual portraiture, which I have hitherto succeeded in representing as no bad specimen of that mingled professional and philosophical character, which may sometimes be met with among the manu-

facturers of the first crop—that is, those who began their career about 1792. The object of the work is a view of society generally, as the ‘Provost’ was of burgh incidents simply, and of the sort of *genteel* persons who are sometimes found among the emigrants to the United States.”

He thus adds, in reference to his private affairs—“It is curious enough that, in the new cabinet, I have five acquaintances, besides two of the ministers out of doors; but I fear I shall not, such is the state of the time, be able either to get my public claims, or my own private demand, adjusted.”

Early in April 1831, Mr Galt removed, with his family, to Barn Cottage, Old Brompton, where, although in the immediate neighbourhood of the town—being scarcely a mile and a half from Hyde Park Corner—he had all the advantages of a large garden, and was surrounded by nurseries and green fields. A gradual increase in his complaints compelled him to relax in his literary pursuits; and he had recourse to various kinds of pastime to consume his leisure. His mechanical turn here stood him in good stead; but his mind was not so much worn out as his body, and he longed for more active occupation. He felt, indeed, that relaxation was proper; but with a mind like his, prone to enterprize, and teeming with designs, he also felt the misery of being condemned to idleness. On this account, he looked upon the three or four months succeeding the publication of “Bogle Corbet” as among the most uncomfortable of his whole life.

The rise of Canadian stock about this time once more turned his attention to the real nature and capabilities of joint-stock companies, and to the pointing out the class of persons the most likely to be benefited by them. One or two other of his plans and intentions—which were, however, never fulfilled—are contained in the following letter:—

Barn Cottage, Old Brompton, 16th May 1831.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am very happy to hear that you think well of “Bogle Corbet.” Some of my friends are, however, of opinion that it is too obviously didactic. I have been much amused by one of the reviews discussing Bogle’s philosophy, as if it was seriously propounded by myself. They might as well ascribe the thoughts and character of Iago to Shakspeare. It is curious that, both with respect to Byron and some of my earlier things, the criticism seems to have been dictated, more than once, by personal enmity. I really consider myself much and singularly indebted to you, as almost the only personal friend that has had the civility to say a good word of me or mine. It is something like destiny; for although, in most instances, the maledictions have proved fruitless in the end, yet the animosity indulged is so unprovoked. I never intended injury or ill-will to any one: I wish it were in my power to say as much of some of my adversaries. I do not call them enemies, unless it be according to the definition of Tacitus—because they have attempted to injure.

Picken bids me thank you for your contribution to the “Club Book:” and your tale is in much esteem with him. By the way, I think we might make a work together of the same sort. It has often occurred to me that an *occasional* work, containing tales and criticism, would do well to be called “The Occasional,” and I had some thoughts of speaking to a bookseller on the subject. What do you think of the idea? The editorship I would myself undertake.

The accounts of Sir Walter are very distressing. I called at Mr Lockhart’s on Saturday, and learned with sorrow that he had gone to Scotland, in consequence of a letter he had received from Mrs L——, who is at Abbotsford.

You will be surprised that I take no interest in the Reform question; but the boys are fierce Tories. By the way, the tale in “Bogle Corbet” is a joint composition of Tom and Alexander, with scarcely a word altered. I have preserved the MS. from which it is printed, and they are engaged on another, which is still better. The manners of the trio are somewhat

singular, for the whole party have not one companion of their own age, but all their friendships are among their elders.

You will receive "The Players" with this. Some of the lives I think are good, and others very amusing; at all events, it is one of the cheapest books that has been published, whatever other merit it may possess. You will be surprised at Savage; and I would draw your particular attention to the literary notices respecting Garrick and King. I begin to write and print nearly about the same time, and am seldom a sheet in advance of the press. It is by this I do so much, with seemingly so little trouble or interval.

I could wish to be able to visit Scotland this summer; but I fear it will not be in my power. Should circumstances lead you to come this way, there is always a bed here ready.—With kindest regards, I remain truly yours,

JOHN GALT.

Having learned, about this time, that a joint-stock company on a great scale was forming at Liverpool, with the intention of making New Brunswick the scene of its operations, Mr Galt's wonted excitability for the time returned; and he lost not a moment until he had learned from Mr Ellice whether that gentleman were disposed to sell his superb seigniory in Lower Canada, situated at the confluence of the St Lawrence and the Ottawa, and amounting to about three hundred and fifty thousand acres. Having received an answer accordant with his views, he waited on Lord Howick, from whom he learned that an association, intending to purchase the crown lands in the American provinces, might again be treated with. The formation of a new company now occupied his attention; and he looked about for supporters to his scheme. Many of the gentlemen on whom he had calculated for support were found, however, unfortunately to be pre-engaged in the New Brunswick Company forming at Liverpool, and thus a serious obstacle interposed. He put himself in communication with the projec-

tors of the undertaking there ; and, in the hopes that his colonial scheme might be yet blended with theirs, he went with their deputation to the secretary of state. Their plans were found to be as yet very crude, and the interview was unsatisfactory. He, accordingly, resolved to act independently of them altogether, and, taking his own course, proceeded to form a provisional committee of gentlemen, who might agree to act as directors. A public meeting was afterwards called, and requisite preparations being made, the company was duly constituted, Mr Galt being unanimously elected provisional secretary.

While these schemes and projects were hatching without doors, Mr Galt was sedulously occupying his leisure hours with his pen. "Stanley Buxton" was the work in succession ; and, at intervals of no very distant date, that was followed by "The Member," "The Radical," and "Eben Erskine," adding other eight volumes to an already voluminous catalogue.

As a composition, "Stanley Buxton" is unequal, and as a story, deficient in probability ; but the feelings called up by the various incidents, are naturally sketched ; and the writer exercises throughout a spell over his reader, which carries him forward with interest. It would be unjust, however, to estimate Mr Galt's talents as an author by his later novels. On this subject he himself judiciously observes :—"For some time I had endeavoured to please the public, more than gratify myself, in the composition of my works. This was not judicious ; book-sellers, in fact, judge as men of business, not always as critics ; they have little perception of originality, and estimate the probability of the sale of a new work by its resemblance to others that have sold well. The consequence is, that, but for the conceit of authors, all literature would become as common-place and similar in every department, as a town built of bricks. Any talent that I ever possessed lay in the delineation of what may be called moral and visible description ; and I am sure, when

I worked with a story, it was in comparatively galling harness. Had I been a rich man, I would have better pleased myself, persuaded that what was lost in popularity would have been made up in durability."

"The Member," and "The Radical," are autobiographical sketches, and the former especially displays much of that Flemish minuteness and truth of delineation, which impart so much value to "The Annals" and "The Provost." It is evidently written *con amore*; and, throughout, we have the impress of that strong and firm hand which so picturesquely brought out Balwhidder and Pawkie, Andrew Wylie the crafty and Walter the simpleton. Neither the one nor the other, however, gained much public attention in this country; but, on the continent, they were regarded in the light of philosophical brochures, and attracted more notice, especially in France, than any other of our author's productions.

Although during the whole of 1831, under the influence of a languor which heralded disease, Mr Galt proceeded, at intervals, with his literary tasks. His time was a good deal occupied with the early business of the British American Land Company, and a feeling of exhaustion disabled him from close application; yet, by page and page, he contrived to work out yet another of the works we have mentioned, to which he gave the name of "Eben Erskine." The book is a very clever one, and is supposed to contain occasional outlines of his own early history, as also descriptions of scenes visited in his youthful rambles abroad. Were we to recommend the reader to a perusal of any of the later productions of our author, and as suggestive of the change perceptible between these and his earlier, though less ambitious works, we do not know where we could find a fitter illustration than in the pages of this novel. It is quite different from his Scottish pictures of life—is formed on another plan, and written in another style; yet something of the same species of intellect

is apparent throughout, and we feel as if guided by the same hand, although through a very different region.

In the spring of 1832, Mr Galt's complaints began to assume a much more aggravated form. The affection of the spine became intolerably painful, and something resembling an attack of paralysis was induced. His speech was occasionally indistinct; his handwriting was visibly affected; and, for several months, he could not walk into his sitting-room without much difficulty. Having, at this time, expressed a desire that I should visit him, I saw him at Brompton in the month of June;—how changed I need not say. When we parted, seven years before, he was in the prime and vigour of manhood; his eye glowing with health, and his step full of elasticity. But instead of the powerful and vigorous frame, which seemed destined to support the weight of a century, before me sat the drooping figure of one old before his time, crippled in his movements, and evidently but half-resigned to this premature curtailment of his mental and bodily exertions. In the treatment of his complaints he had been subjected to much acute pain, and, at times, his sensations from his ailments were of the most unpleasant kind; yet, when free from these, his eye lightened up with all its wonted vivacity, and his mind evinced all its subtlety, knowledge, and observation. Indeed, he confessed to occasional states of feeling, in which his powers of fancy, intellect, and combination, were much brighter than they ever were in the days of his best health; but these were unnatural, and could only be looked upon as the results of disease, and as originating in a too excitable condition of the nervous system. As a proof of this, they were invariably followed by a corresponding languor and depression; and the sunbright glimpses which had been vouchsafed, seemed only to serve the unhappy purpose of rendering the encompassing gloom more palpable.

Notwithstanding all these depressing influences, added to the

melancholy fact, that his helplessness had come upon him just at the time when his most active exertions were necessary for the disposal in life of his three sons, who were all very dear to him, and of whom he had every reason to be proud, he not only bore up with a cheerful magnanimity, but, at every interval of comparative freedom from suffering, took to his pen with all his olden diligence and industry. His handwriting was, however, sometimes so much crippled, that he was obliged to dictate; and thus were produced his interesting and beautiful tale of "The Stolen Child," as well as his "Autobiography"—also a work of striking merit.

In a letter of 21st July, he thus writes me—"I am, on the whole, considerably better since you left, but still very awkward in my walking. If you see the *New Monthly*, with Lady Blessington's papers about Byron, I wish you would write me what you think of them. I regard her sketches as strikingly like. I you think well of them, write me, as it will help to allay her dread of the critics. As I cannot yet go about, I am not in the way of hearing news beyond what every body knows from the papers."

Towards the conclusion of the year, several attacks, analogous to paralysis, succeeded each other at uncertain intervals, and one of them deprived him for some minutes entirely of sight. His general strength was now more permanently affected; and the change in his handwriting became more and more apparent. During the winter he was almost entirely confined to the house, and his lameness was such that he could not get up stairs without considerable difficulty. It was impossible for him, however, to be idle; and tale after tale, and essay after essay, were conceived and executed. The following letter, which is touching enough, shows the state of his mind, and the character of his pursuits, in the ensuing spring:—

Barn Cottage, Old Brompton, 25th April 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,—Not being to-day in the best of spirits, I feel, like others, disposed to wreak my chagrin on my friends, and on you among others. John and Thomas have sailed for Canada, and you cannot imagine how much this event disconcerts me. Perhaps it is owing to my disease that it affects me so much; but I could not have conceived, *a priori*, that it would have depressed me to any degree like what it has done. John, poor fellow, goes with my full concurrence, though I cannot say the same of Thomas: but I submit. He is himself in the mean time pleased; but the Canada Company have not acted towards his father so as to give me the slightest confidence.

I am willing to think that I feel morbid on this point; but I cannot help it, especially as every day confirms the soundness of my undertakings in the Upper Province, and the Company have pocketed above £300,000 through my instrumentality—putting out of the question the good done to Canada, and the relief there granted to the poor of this country. When I went out as Commissioner, the circulating medium did not amount to £72,000; and last year upwards of 300,000 sovereigns were lodged in the Bank of Upper Canada. Although I myself say it, it has fallen to the lot of few to have done so much for any country, and to be so used, for the Government openly say they were overreached;—just as if the present distress in this country could have been foreseen in the spring of 1824.

My health is upon the whole mending, but I cannot move without aid; so my active life is over, and the hopes which led me towards the British American Land Company must be given up. We only wait for letters from Canada to make me retire, for I am no longer fit for public business. This is a great calamity; for it will oblige me to depend entirely on literature, a poor trade, and even for it I am sorely disabled.

Since “The Stolen Child,” I have dictated another work in two volumes. It is finished, and I think one of the best I ever wrote. It is a tale of the Reformation, and in the incidents and development as original as I could make it. It is a German

story ; and, from the rapidity with which it has been composed, seems to myself as a kind of inspiration. This is not all. I have nearly finished a work to be published every alternate month. It is printing on royal 4to, and in external appearance will be one of the most elegant of the time. The plates are by Belshazzar Martin, who was a kind of protégé of mine in the days of the years of old. Our first No. contains for picture, "The Eve of the Deluge;" for story, a tale of that event, with accounts from different authors—one of them from a work not even in the British Museum. I will send a copy of "the Ouranologos" for Mrs M.'s table. The tale is in a new style for me, and I will be glad to hear what you think of it.

My lameness gives me much leisure, and that apportioning of my time I have been long accustomed to, enables me to do a great deal, even to the surprise of myself; for I have in the mean time been obliged to suspend reading, as it invariably makes me fall asleep. What I feel most is an occasional brightness of intellect, which on reflection is often attended with alarm, as my natural sleep declines. Can you advise me any thing as to this? Dr A. T. Thomson is for a voyage, or a residence at the seaside. But I am so helpless, and so many troubles perplex me that require a stouter health to withstand.—Ever yours truly,

JOHN GALT.

Although, as has been said, "Eben Erskine" was written before "The Stolen Child," which appeared as the fourth volume of Leitch Ritchie's *Library of Romance*, it was not published till the spring of 1833. Of the merits of "Eben," we have already ventured to give some faint idea; nor was "The Stolen Child" less able. The story was suggested by the fact of a second son possessing the title which belonged to his elder brother—all the rest is pure invention. The characters, more especially Tomlin's mother and the old woman, are strongly but naturally drawn, and the portrait of Mrs Servit, with her habitual affection for Troven, is very striking. As a whole,

the volume is a very impressive one, and far beyond the grasp of any mediocre intellect.

The following remarks, at this time made, show the state in which Mr Galt was—"The leaden slippers in which Time, grown a huzzy-fellow, dawdles at the bedside of infirmity, causes the invalid to become morbidly sharp-sighted on the practices of the world. He soon sees the intervals lengthen in the visit of particular friends, and feels himself the cause of more trouble to others than may be congenial to his own disposition. These observations, though they may seem to relate to trifles, are nevertheless serious things to him, and make up a great part of the irksome burden of disease." He was thus again induced to have recourse as a recreation to mechanical experiments; but, like the Greenwich pensioner—who thought of making use of his hands, both of which had been shot away—when he came to handle leaden pipes and weights, he was only made more aware of his increasing helplessness. In this dilemma, he was compelled to alter his tack and to turn his eyes inward; and, as he himself says, "there is no end to speculations of this kind, even while one is sensible afterwards that they furnish the means of decorating, as it were, very common-place things with recondite remarks. They also lead the idle man to form very curious theories, amusing without being useful—if that which makes the time pass away easily can be said not to be useful." In this state of waking dream Mr Galt composed "The Ouranologos;" but notwithstanding the exquisite grandeur of Mr Martin's first illustration, the work did not succeed, and was given up after the publication of one number.

The German tale alluded to, as having been written after "The Stolen Child," was entitled "The Lutheran," and occupied about one half of three volumes—afterwards published under the title of "Stories of the Study." The collection, besides several tales of great merit, as "The Greenwich Pen-

sioner," and "Heron Glenie," contained also three sketches in his own peculiar style, and possessing much of the freshness and observation which characterized his first delineations of Scottish life. "The Jaunt" furnishes the remarks of Mr Daidles of Ayrshire, on continental scenery and manners; while "The Dean of Guild" and "The Seamstress" are portraitures, true to a generation which has just passed away. The former sketch is not more distinguished for its graphic humour, than is the other for its quiet home-life pathos.

Previous to the appearance, however, of the "Stories of the Study," Mr Galt had finished an autobiography in two volumes, in which he philosophizes on the history of his own checkered span. Being unable to hold the pen, it was written from his dictation, and this may probably account for an occasional laxity and diffuseness in its style, which is sometimes but too apparent. The work was read with avidity, and, by the November of the same year, a second edition was called for. It is curious and interesting certainly, but its fault consists in its being rather a commentary on the events of his own life, which are imperfectly glanced at, than a narration of those events themselves—rather a philosophizing on occurrences than a history of them.

Shortly after publishing the "Stories of the Study," the invalid condition of Mr Galt preventing him from writing, and often also from reading, he was induced, as an amusement, to collect his poetical effusions together, and publish them in a volume. These are of various merit, and were written at casual intervals, within a range of thirty years. "The Hermit Peter" was that which the author himself held in the most estimation; but to us it seems inferior to "The Star of Destiny"—a dramatic spectacle, finely conceived, and containing several passages of high poetical beauty. We still, however, adhere to our already expressed opinion, that verse was not Mr Galt's natural walk. The vigour and elasticity of his mind kept him, in whatever he did, far away

from the beaten paths of mere imitation; but his fancy was more recondite and curious than exalted, and his taste in versification was formed on unfortunate models. Another little volume of the same kind was edited after his death by Miss Harriet Pigott, author of "Records of Real Life," which contains many pleasing, and one or two striking compositions. The lines, entitled "Irvine Water," especially, are full of excellence; and might have been written by Goldsmith or Cowper, without disparagement to the muse of either. The following lines, composed in 1824, show the depressed state of Mr Galt's mind at the time, and are imbued with a stern reality, which compensates for the want of elaborate polish.

REPININGS.

Shade of the friend who earliest taught
The glory meet for manly thought;
And hopes of fame indulgent brought
Bright from the sky;
Deem'dst thou my lot, with this was fraught?
Lo! where I lie!

Yes!—I may check the hopeless tear,
Were anguish all I had to fear;
Who knows the bed is but a bier,
Would e'er complain?
But life to wrench from famine here
In helpless pain!

I thought the boundless flying wind
That sweeps the welkin unconfined,
Flew not more charter'd than the mind
From earth to heaven;
When flowers and stars, a garland twined,
To Hope were given.

Stern fortitude! effectless power
To him that feels affliction lower,
And ling'ring lies in restless bower,
As time creeps slow;
Thou can'st but soothe to them the hour
That see the woe.

O Death! and wilt thou still impend?
Nor bid this weary languor end?

Art thou indeed a worldly friend,
And spar'st for grief?
Thy sweet entrancing opiate send,
Oh! grant relief!

From what has been already stated as the apparent fault of the autobiography, I hinted to Mr Galt that he might throw together a few chapters, containing the literary history of his various works, which could not fail to be acceptable to his admirers. The following extract from a letter, dated 11th December 1833, alludes to this subject:—

“What you say about my things has also been so publicly and privately urged, that I have really begun, and have written a considerable part of an additional volume, to be called the ‘Literary History,’ &c. It will be much more curious and amusing than I had supposed; for, in looking over my papers, I have found a batch of MSS. that I did not think existed. They were written prior to my going abroad for the first time. As to my poems, I begin to think that they are not so bad. The sylvan scene you quote, has been praised in several of the papers; and, in the ‘*True Sun*,’ Leigh Hunt is as polite as a Tory. It is curious that I feel more anxious to hear of these poems than of any thing I ever wrote.”

He then alludes thus to his projected return to Scotland, and to the state of his health:—“I can say nothing farther yet about the house, as I have got a hint from one of the government offices to try if some business can still be done. This is, mean time however, between ourselves. But I am so poorly in my lower limbs, that I have not yet taken it up. My complaint is very singular. The paralysis is almost entirely gone into the feet, and is often attended with great pain. Frequently when sitting I am quite well.”

In alternations of relapse and partial recovery, the winter passed over; and in writing me, on 15th April 1834, he says, “I feel this new attack, the tenth, worse than all which went

before; but I have got my work (the 'Literary Life and Miscellanies') finished, and little is to be done but to get it ready for the press in Edinburgh. The War Office has kindly offered to frank the sheets."

A circumstance which deeply affected him occurred in the beginning of March; and is thus mentioned in a letter, dated the 4th of that month:—"I daresay it will surprise you to hear that your friend Alexander (Mr G.'s youngest son) is by this time on the Atlantic. He has received an appointment in the New Company, and, with the accountant, was ordered off on the shortest possible notice. He intended to write you; but latterly he was much hurried, and could not wait even an answer from his aunt. I was not prepared for such haste; for, since I found myself useless, I have been making arrangements to go also in the course of the summer to Canada, where the boys are, and Alexander was looked to as a standing in the voyage. What effect it may have on my ultimate determinations, I cannot say. I am only as yet sensible to his absence."

He afterwards thus alludes to a scheme, which, whatever may have been its practicability, was, at all events, too late for him:—"The world does not use me as my infirmities require. A number of gentlemen, interested in Ireland, have requested me to superintend the getting up of a Company; and though in no condition to undertake such a work, I am under obligations of friendship to one of them, which will not let me refuse. You will probably soon hear of it through the papers, as the government are favourable to the outline. I have, however, no intention of going farther than to set the design afloat in the city. Indeed I cannot; for I am often very poorly. This extraordinary upcast is of a piece with all the incidents of my life, and it comes too late—it comes, too, at a time to make me feel my inability only more acutely. However, I am a little flattish in parting with Alexander, which you must excuse."

To those who are aware of the active and enterprising tendencies of Mr Galt's mind, nothing can be imagined more melancholy than the situation to which he found himself at this time reduced. It would have even been a consolation to think, that his corporeal infirmities had in some degree blunted the acuteness of his feelings—but this was by no means the case; and all his manifold deprivations were spread out, as on a map before him. One after another, his three sons had left him, and all were now away from their native land; his life had been one of continued labour and exertion; and, if he had accomplished much for others, little of worldly good had accrued to himself. While yet but at that age which many consider the vigour of life, he was a broken down and nearly helpless invalid. Of the thousand who had been delighted by his works, how few spared even a thought for their author; and while spreading the seeds of wealth and happiness around a young colony, he had been unceremoniously—shall we say ungenerously—removed from the sphere of his usefulness. He had been dreaming golden dreams, and awoke to find himself in narrowed circumstances; and, as if in mockery of his forlorn estate, prospects of aggrandizement were held out to him, when natural impossibilities interposed. With all the eagerness to be useful, he was left alone in his solitary chair—whose only travel was from his bedroom to his parlour—to think of baffled hopes and abandoned projects—and to feel that his talents, however successfully applied for the advancement of others, had produced but a harvest of chaff for himself. The day of his destiny he knew to be over; yet his sorrow arose not from mere chagrin. If he had looked forward to a more auspicious termination of his labours, he had also indulged in the fond hope of having accomplished more both in thought and action; and though darkened even to the verge of despair as were his surrounding views, his natural energy refused to give way, and every transient gleam of re-

turning health brought along with it a renewal of mental exertion.

The three volumes of "Literary Miscellanies" being now completed, Mr Galt came down by sea to Scotland, late in the spring of 1834, and went into lodgings in Edinburgh with a view of superintending their publication, ere proceeding to Greenock, where he meant to take up his abode. His temporary residence chanced to be in Hill Street, where he remained for two months. I frequently saw him at this time, and more than once drove out with him for a few miles to the country. He was now much thinner, and after a sleepless night his features were hollow and haggard; but, when he engaged in conversation, his eye lighted up as in earlier days, and he became not only placid, but cheerful. There was still the same wakeful industry; his writing materials were ever beside him; and around lay the half finished tale, the outlines of the projected essay, the notes for a new edition, or the recovered manuscript of a former year. To behold any fellow mortal so circumstanced, could not but awaken feelings of melancholy—how much more so, when that individual was John Galt!

The lodgings taken for Mr Galt were, as has been mentioned, in Hill Street, and his friend Mr Blackwood resided in Ainslie Place, probably not more than a hundred yards off; yet, strange to say, although they had not seen each other for years, it was destined that they were never to see each other again—for Mr Blackwood was then laid on that sick-bed from which he was not to arise. Day after day, my professional duties as well as my friendship led me to visit each; and it afforded me a melancholy pleasure to carry from the one invalid to the other the courtesies of mutual regard, and the kindest wishes for restored health.

Mr Galt had been advised to obtain the permission of William the Fourth to dedicate his "Literary Miscellanies" to him,

and the answer to his application was as follows. It was contained in a letter from his Majesty's private secretary, Sir Herbert Taylor:—

Windsor Castle, March 12, 1834.

SIR,—I have had the honour of submitting your letter of yesterday to the King, and I have received his Majesty's commands, to assure you of his ready acquiescence in your wish to dedicate your "Literary Life and Miscellanies" to him.

His Majesty, indeed, feels obliged to those who have suggested an application, which offers him the opportunity of manifesting the interest he must, in common with his subjects, take in the success of the proposed publication, and his sense of the merits of an individual, whose works have so well established his own reputation, while they have raised the literary character of this country. I have the honour to be, with great regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

H. TAYLOR.

JOHN GALT, Esq.

Whenever the work issued from the press, which was about the beginning of August, Mr Galt left Edinburgh for Greenock, in which, or its neighbourood, he had determined to take up his residence. In a week or two afterwards, however, he removed to Gourock, and, among other things, the following letter explains why:—

Maybank, Gourock, 28th August 1834.

MY DEAR SIR,—Since I came westward, I have been in such a comatose state—it was not indolence—that I could not, till yesterday, muster resolution to do any thing I could postpone. It was, I think, some feeling of this depression that made me leave Edinburgh so suddenly; and to find my sister's house and garden at Greenock so surrounded by buildings as to preclude me taking the air, as I expected, did not add to my *agrèments*. In the end, I removed to this watering-place, where I am more at my ease. My address, however, is still Greenock.

The languor that afflicted me is abated, and I am nearly again as I saw you, but dreadfully susceptible to changes of weather.

By Mr Robert Blackwood's last letter, I infer that his father is still growing worse. I wish, if it were not troubling you too much, that you would let me know how he is, and if there have been many changes. You cannot imagine what a morbid anxiety I have taken about him, or how much I feel at leaving Edinburgh without ever being able to call. No effort or resolution of mine can soften the impression of such a circumstance.

In this sequestration I shall hear little of your great scientific meeting; but keep your ears expert for news, and recollect you have a greedy depositary. Mrs Galt unites with me in best respects to Mrs M—, and entreating your indulgence for so brief a note, I remain, my dear sir, faithfully yours,

J. GALT.

Towards the approach of winter, Mr Galt again returned to Greenock; and any change in his health was to the worse, not to the better. At times he fell into a state of extreme languor, approaching to stupor; but, as this cleared away for a space, his restless activity ever and anon returned, and at one time he would employ himself in stringing together couplets, and at another in constructing machines—which he accomplished by the aid of an expert young carpenter. But, withal, the day hung heavy on his hands, for often, for weeks together, he could not move from his seat, or turn in bed without assistance. What a contrast from his Canadian life!—now in contact with the newly-arrived settler on the shore, and now with the aboriginal Indian in the wilderness of the primeval woods—now sailing from lake to lake—now up “the great rivers, great as any sea.” Oftentimes, as he himself confessed, his heart died within him; but, when undisturbed, it re-assumed its wonted serenity and calmness. Alone and quiet, he was occasionally, to his own sensations, as well as ever; but from the shock that his nervous system had sustained, his agitation, when in the slightest degree molested, was extreme. Away from the society of the friends of

sunnier years, unable to rise, unable to read, unable to write, too often might he now apply to his days the epithet of Job, and say that he "had no pleasure in them."

To add to all these distresses, the circumstances of his family were any thing but flourishing—indeed, were otherwise to an extent that his friends at a distance had no conception of, as it had, the year before, been bruited abroad in the newspapers that government had settled upon him for life an annuity of £200. It was only recently, however, that most of them, and myself among the rest, were able to learn that the only money, after closing accounts with his booksellers, that he ever received, was a present to that amount from King William the Fourth, on the publication of his "Miscellanies." For this well-timed act of munificence, however, every admirer of Galt will give a blessing to the memory of that sovereign.

I have before me a series of letters from my excellent friend, written between 1835 and the period of his death; but it might give no pleasure to the reader to trace his gradual decline into helpless, hopeless debility. Yet during these years his pen was not always idle; and he contributed a variety of papers to periodical works, besides occasionally editing the productions of others. For some time after removing to Greenock, he frequently took airings in an open carriage; but, for eighteen months before he died, this was rendered impracticable, from the increased difficulty of locomotion, and the dropsical state of his lower extremities. Month passed away after month, only to swell a dreary catalogue; but he bore his sufferings with great firmness and patience, and, as the close drew nigh, with remarkable placidity.

Throughout all this latter sojourn in the west of Scotland, although his sons had left this country for Canada, Mrs Galt was with him; and he was cheered by the kind and affectionate

attentions of his only sister, Mrs Macfie, who made her house his home, and, in the intervals allowed by her own broken health, tended upon him with unwearied assiduity.

Mr Galt breathed his last about half-past five in the morning of the 11th April 1839; and his remains lie interred in the family grave, within the new burying-ground of Greenock.

In glancing over his checkered career, it is impossible not to be impressed with the conviction that his was a severe and melancholy fate. Endowed by nature with uncommon energy and talent, he commenced life with the fairest prospects of success; but, somehow or other, misfortunes little attributable to himself, and over which he had no control, too often blighted his schemes. His very first connexion in business landed him in difficulties, which eventually drove him from his native country; and, when these difficulties were at length overcome, the precarious state of his health compelled him to a dreary length of inactive repose. Sanguine in all his projects, even a partial failure in any was keenly felt by him; and when he saw the mercenary and the mean marching forward in the walks of successful preferment, his heart must have often ached to acknowledge that "the race was not always to the swift, or the battle to the strong." Open, generous, and unsuspecting, he was not willing to believe that he could be subtly overreached; and the benevolence of his disposition often prompted him to be doing kind offices to others, even to his own personal inconvenience. No one was more unselfish in pecuniary matters; and, although his income was always laboriously won, it was ever open-heartedly spent. In all with whom he became acquainted, he inspired a feeling of attachment; and, even when at the height of his literary reputation and worldly success, he was as unaffected and sincere as his own Micah Balwhidder.

Mr Galt was not only a man of untiring industry, but of strong and original powers. These were, of course, less shown

in his earlier works of research—as his lives of Wolsey and West; or of observation—as his “Commercial Travels” and “Letters from the Levant.” Many people could have written these, acute, intelligent, and meritorious as they are; but who could have supplied the place of “The Legatees,” “The Annals,” or “The Provost?” In these his natural genius, for the first time, found “ample room and verge enough;” and on these it has left its peculiar impress. They are less compositions than outpourings of the mind; less like the waters pumped up from the well, than the spontaneous gushings of the fountain. Often constrained, from his delicacy in boyhood, to abstain from the more active pursuits of his playmates, his was the quiet eye that early learned to brood on his own heart, and he treasured up a throng of recollections, from which the judgment of maturer years enabled him, by apportioning different elements to different characters, to work out a mosaic, rich in its varieties of delineation, yet all true to nature. He was thus one of the few of whom it is difficult to say, whether or not he would have benefited, by what is to most of so much importance—a thorough university education. The subject is a wide and a disputable one, and much may be said both for and against; but though holding at arm’s length the vile dogmas of utilitarianism, it appears less than problematical that such a training would have debilitated minds like those of Burns, or Byron, or Scott, or Dickens—because the elements of their excellence are gleaned less from books, than from actual observation, and the colouring of their pictures imparted, not by imitative tact, but by genius. The metaphysician analyzes passion instead of describing its manifestations, and the critic descants only on what others have seen or felt—while the logician would fain prove what ought to be done in particular situations, rather than what the frailties and sensibilities of human nature lead beings differently constituted to do. Hence the product is didactic generalization—a melting down

of the individuals into the mass. But a mind, which has not been subjected to the fetters of scholastic discipline, like that of Galt, feels at liberty to think, to reason, and to describe for itself—it “dallies with the sun, and scorns the breeze;” and nature and observation being the only shrines at which it worships, its gatherings in must be valuable, even although at harvest time a few tares may be mingled with the wheat. His conception was strong and vivid; his fancy graphic and picturesque; and his judgment generally acute. But he was not always free from prejudices, and occasionally allowed these to warp his reasoning powers; nor was his taste to be depended on. If he set out on the wrong tact, or if his subject was unadapted for him—as was “The Earthquake”—his native energy only led him on to a deeper and yet a deeper floundering in the “slough of despond;” whereas, if on the right one—lay it in the fields of observation, as in “The Annals,”—or in those of imagination, as in “The Omen,”—something undefined in the mere train of association, seemed to enable him to proceed securely. However imperfect in some particulars his mind might be, there is no denying that it was framed in a large mould; in its designs and in its accomplishments it was great, and though in the latter it might occasionally fail, the failure was never a puny but a splendid one. He sought out new fields, and he fearlessly ventured upon them—sometimes injudiciously—but careless whether so or not—provided his own were the first footmarks. Yet in spite of all this, he was decried by some as an imitator. Whom did he imitate? The “Annals of the Parish” were written before “Waverley;” and by others he was undervalued as a mere mannerist—although not one of his detractors ever had ingenuity enough to discover that he was the author of “The Omen.”

From earliest youth the love of distinction was Galt's ruling passion, and perhaps the fault of his life was, that he did not steadily pursue it by one avenue. Active alike in body and

mind, he now sought fortune and fame in the crowded haunts, "where man encounters man in daily strife;" and now in the reveries of the closet. He would show the merchant, not only that he knew business in its details, but that he knew it as a science. Now a poet, now a historian, now a dramatist, now a biographer, now a critic, now an essayist, and now a novelist, he strove

"To multiply himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents;"

he was now bent on the discovery of an indelible ink—now on the damming of a river—now on the construction of a bridge—now on the cutting of a canal—now on the felling of a forest—now on the draining of a swamp—now on the invention of a hydraulic machine—now on the endowment of an hospital—now on the formation of a company—and now on the founding of a city. Formed to lead, and ever fond of leading, he felt that to follow in the wake of any one was an abasement; and opposition thus only increased the dictations of self-will. Hence the unhappy quarrels with some, who could not feel otherwise than well-disposed towards him; and hence the proud reserve, that chose rather to suffer than receive benefits from those who had the power to injure, but not the magnanimity to confess that they had done so. His varied career brought him into contact with a great many of the most distinguished of his contemporaries both at home and abroad, and his knowledge of the world generally, as well as his perception of individual character, was extensive and intimate. But he was a Heraclitus rather than a Democritus, and his constitutional benignity taught him to look with a lenient eye on the follies and frailties of his fellow-creatures.

The kindness of heart, as well as the variety and force of talent which characterized Mr Galt, could not fail to make him generally esteemed and appreciated. Withal, however, as before

hinted, his lot could not be considered as a happy one, although the love of nature, and his relish of society, were such as to open up to him ever new fountains of enjoyment. To what, then, can we trace this? Probably to his having no fixed aim in life. One summit of ambition gained, another still presented itself;

“Hills peeped o’er hills, and alps on alps arose.”

Emulation from her quiver was ever shooting some new shaft, and he became a victim; *hæret lateri lethalis arundo*. The ruin of his commercial hopes, in the outset of his career, disgusted him with the routine of business, so called; and he was thus left, “a chartered libertine” in his prospects, to walk on in whatever direction the skies for the time might seem brightest.

The career of Galt is now closed; and in his latter years he might well sigh over “the unwilling gratitude of base mankind.” But his is among the bright names of his country, and will stand out to after times as one of the landmarks of the age in which he lived. Then shall the wandering emigrants whom he located have become a flourishing nation, holding his memory in honour from generation to generation; and then shall it be found that his happier works are not only valuable chronicles of obsolete manners, but that they embalm the very idiom in which they are written.



END OF BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR.



THE ANNALS OF THE PARISH



ANNALS OF THE PARISH

INTRODUCTION.

IN the same year, and on the same day of the same month, that his Sacred Majesty King George, the third of the name, came to his crown and kingdom, I was placed and settled as the minister of Dalmailing. When about a week thereafter this was known in the parish, it was thought a wonderful thing, and every body spoke of me and the new king as united in our trusts and temporalities, marvelling how the same should come to pass, and thinking the hand of Providence was in it, and that surely we were pre-ordained to fade and flourish in fellowship together ; which has really been the case : for in the same season that his Most Excellent Majesty, as he was very properly styled in the proclamations for the general fasts and thanksgivings, was set by as a precious vessel which had received a crack or a flaw, and could only be serviceable in the way of an ornament, I was obliged, by reason of age and the growing infirmities of my recollection, to consent to the earnest entreaties of the Session, and to accept of Mr Amos to be my helper. I was long reluctant to do so ; but the great respect that my people had for me, and the love that I bore towards them, over and above the sign that was given to me in the removal of the royal candlestick from its place, worked upon my heart and understanding, and I could not stand out. So, on the last Sabbath of the year 1810, I preached my last sermon, and it was a moving discourse. There were few dry eyes in the kirk that day ; for I had been with the aged from the beginning—the young considered me as their natural pastor—and my bidding them all farewell was, as when

of old among the heathen, an idol was taken away by the hands of the enemy.

At the close of the worship, and before the blessing, I addressed them in a fatherly manner; and, although the kirk was fuller than ever I saw it before, the fall of a pin might have been heard—at the conclusion there was a sobbing and much sorrow. I said,

“My dear friends, I have now finished my work among you for ever. I have often spoken to you from this place the words of truth and holiness; and, had it been in poor frail human nature to practise the advice and counselling that I have given in this pulpit to you, there would not need to be any cause for sorrow on this occasion—the close and latter end of my ministry. But, nevertheless, I have no reason to complain; and it will be my duty to testify, in that place where I hope we are all one day to meet again, that I found you a docile and a tractable flock, far more than at first I could have expected. There are among you still a few, but with grey heads and feeble hands now, that can remember the great opposition that was made to my placing, and the stout part they themselves took in the burly, because I was appointed by the patron; but they have lived to see the error of their way, and to know that preaching is the smallest portion of the duties of a faithful minister. I may not, my dear friends, have applied my talent in the pulpit so effectually as perhaps I might have done, considering the gifts that it pleased God to give me in that way, and the education that I had in the Orthodox University of Glasgow, as it was in the time of my youth; nor can I say that, in the works of peace-making and charity, I have done all that I should have done. But I have done my best, studying no interest but the good that was to rise according to the faith in Christ Jesus.

“To my young friends I would, as a parting word, say, look to the lives and conversation of your parents—they were plain, honest, and devout Christians, fearing God and honouring the King. They believed the Bible was the word of God; and, when they practised its precepts, they found, by the good that came from them, that it was truly so. They bore in mind the tribulation and persecution of their forefathers for righteousness’

sake, and were thankful for the quiet and protection of the government in their day and generation. Their land was tilled with industry, and they ate the bread of carefulness with a contented spirit, and, verily, they had the reward of well-doing even in this world; for they beheld on all sides the blessing of God upon the nation, and the tree growing, and the plough going where the banner of the oppressor was planted of old, and the war-horse trampled in the blood of martyrs. Reflect on this, my young friends, and know, that the best part of a Christian's duty in this world of much evil, is to thole and suffer with resignation, as lang as it is possible for human nature to do. I do not counsel passive obedience: that is a doctrine that the Church of Scotland can never abide; but the divine right of resistance, which, in the days of her trouble, she so bravely asserted against popish and prelatie usurpations, was never resorted to till the attempt was made to remove the ark of the tabernacle from her. I therefore counsel you, my young friends, not to lend your ears to those that trumpet forth their hypothetical politics; but to believe that the laws of the land are administered with a good intent, till in your own homes and dwellings ye feel the presence of the oppressor—then, and not till then, are ye free to gird your loins for battle—and woe to him, and woe to the land where that is come to, if the sword be sheathed till the wrong be redressed.

“As for you, my old companions, many changes have we seen in our day; but the change that we ourselves are soon to undergo will be the greatest of all. We have seen our bairns grow to manhood—we have seen the beauty of youth pass away—we have felt our backs become unable for the burthen, and our right hand forget its cunning.—Our eyes have become dim, and our heads grey—we are now tottering with short and feckless steps towards the grave; and some, that should have been here this day, are bedrid, lying, as it were, at the gates of death, like Lazarus at the threshold of the rich man's door, full of ails and sores, and having no enjoyment but in the hope that is in hereafter. What can I say to you but farewell! Our work is done—we are weary and worn out, and in need of rest—may the rest of the blessed be our portion!—and in the sleep that

all must sleep, beneath the cold blanket of the kirkyard grass, and on that clay pillow where we must shortly lay our heads, may we have pleasant dreams, till we are awakened to partake of the everlasting banquet of the saints in glory!"

When I had finished, there was for some time a great solemnity throughout the kirk; and, before giving the blessing, I sat down to compose myself, for my heart was big, and my spirit oppressed with sadness.

As I left the pulpit, all the elders stood on the steps to hand me down, and the tear was in every eye, and they helped me into the session-house; but I could not speak to them, nor them to me. Then Mr Dalziel, who was always a composed and sedate man, said a few words of prayer, and I was comforted therewith, and rose to go home to the manse; but in the churchyard all the congregation was assembled, young and old, and they made a lane for me to the back-yett that opened into the manse-garden—Some of them put out their hands and touched me as I passed, followed by the elders, and some of them wept. It was as if I was passing away, and to be no more—verily, it was the reward of my ministry—a faithful account of which, year by year, I now sit down, in the evening of my days, to make up, to the end that I may bear witness to the work of a beneficent Providence, even in the narrow sphere of my parish, and the concerns of that flock of which it was His most gracious pleasure to make me the unworthy shepherd.

CHAPTER I.—YEAR 1760.

THE PLACING OF MR BALWHIDDER—THE RESISTANCE OF THE PARISHIONERS—MRS MALCOLM, THE WIDOW—MR BALWHIDDER'S MARRIAGE.

THE An. Dom. one thousand seven hundred and sixty, was remarkable for three things in the parish of Dalmailing.—First and foremost, there was my placing; then the coming of Mrs Malcolm with her five children to settle among us; and next, my marriage upon my own cousin, Miss Betty Lanshaw, by which the account of this year naturally divides itself into three heads or portions.

First, of the placing.—It was a great affair; for I was put in by the patron, and the people knew nothing whatsoever of me, and their hearts were stirred into strife on the occasion, and they did all that lay within the compass of their power to keep me out, insomuch, that there was obliged to be a guard of soldiers to protect the presbytery; and it was a thing that made my heart grieve when I heard the drum beating and the fife playing as we were going to the kirk. The people were really mad and vicious, and flung dirt upon us as we passed, and reviled us all, and held out the finger of scorn at me; but I endured it with a resigned spirit, compassionating their wilfulness and blindness. Poor old Mr Kilfuddy of the Brachill got such a clash of glar on the side of his face, that his eye was almost extinguished.

When we got to the kirk door, it was found to be nailed up, so as by no possibility to be opened. The sergeant of the soldiers wanted to break it, but I was afraid that the heritors would grudge and complain of the expense of a new door, and I supplicated him to let it be as it was: we were, therefore, obligated to go in by a window, and the crowd followed us in the most unreverent manner, making the Lord's house like an inn on a fair day, with their grievous jellyhooing. During the time of the psalm and the sermon, they behaved themselves better, but when the induction came on, their clamour was dreadful; and Thomas Thorl, the weaver, a pious zealot in that time, he got up

and protested, and said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." And I thought I would have a hard and sore time of it with such an outstrapulous people. Mr Given, that was then the minister of Lugton, was a jocose man, and would have his joke even at a solemnity. When the laying of the hands upon me was adoin, he could not get near enough to put on his, but he stretched out his staff and touched my head, and said, to the great diversion of the rest, "This will do well enough, timber to timber;" but it was an unfriendly saying of Mr Given, considering the time and the place, and the temper of my people.

After the ceremony, we then got out at the window, and it was a heavy day to me; but we went to the manse, and there we had an excellent dinner, which Mrs Watts of the new inns of Irville prepared at my request, and sent her chaise-driver to serve, for he was likewise her waiter, she having then but one chaise, and that no often called for.

But, although my people received me in this unruly manner, I was resolved to cultivate civility among them, and therefore, the very next morning I began a round of visitations; but, oh! it was a steep brae that I had to climb, and it needed a stout heart. For I found the doors in some places barred against me; in others, the bairns, when they saw me coming, ran crying to their mothers, "Here's the feckless Mess-John!" and then, when I went into the houses, their parents wouldna ask me to sit down, but with a scornful way, said, "Honest man, what's your pleasure here?" Nevertheless, I walked about from door to door like a dejected beggar, till I got the almous deed of a civil reception—and who would have thought it?—from no less a person than the same Thomas Thorl that was so bitter against me in the kirk on the foregoing day.

Thomas was standing at the door with his green duffle apron, and his red Kilmarnock nightcap—I mind him as well as if it was but yesterday—and he had seen me going from house to house, and in what manner I was rejected, and his bowels were moved, and he said to me in a kind manner, "Come in, sir, and ease yoursel': this will never do, the clergy are God's gorbies,

and for their Master's sake it behoves us to respect them. There was no ane in the whole parish mair against you than mysel'; but this early visitation is a symptom of grace that I couldna have expectit from a bird out the nest of patronage." I thanked Thomas, and went in with him, and we had some solid conversation together, and I told him that it was not so much the pastor's duty to feed the flock, as to herd them well; and that, although there might be some abler with the head than me, there wasna a he within the bounds of Scotland more willing to watch the fold by night and by day. And Thomas said he had not heard a mair sound observe for some time, and that, if I held to that doctrine in the poopit, it wouldna be lang till I would work a change.—"I was mindit," quoth he, "never to set my foot within the kirk door while you were there; but to testify, and no to condemn without a trial, I'll be there next Lord's day, and egg my neighbours to be likewise, so ye'll no have to preach just to the bare walls and the laird's family."

I have now to speak of the coming of Mrs Malcolm.—She was the widow of a Clyde shipmaster, that was lost at sea with his vessel. She was a genty body, calm and methodical. From morning to night she sat at her wheel, spinning the finest lint, which suited well with her pale hands. She never changed her widow's weeds, and she was aye as if she had just been ta'en out of a bandbox. The tear was aften in her e'e when the bairns were at the school; but when they came home, her spirit was lighted up with gladness, although, poor woman, she had many a time very little to give them. They were, however, wonderful well-bred things, and took with thankfulness whatever she set before them; for they knew that their father, the breadwinner, was away, and that she had to work sore for their bit and drap. I dare say, the only vexation that ever she had from any of them, on their own account, was when Charlie, the eldest laddie, had won fourpence at pitch-and-toss at the school, which he brought home with a proud heart to his mother. I happened to be daunrin' by at the time, and just looked in at the door to say gude-night: it was a sad sight. There was she sitting with the silent tear on her cheek, and Charlie greeting as if he had done a great fault, and the other four looking on

with sorrowful faces. Never, I am sure, did Charlie Malcolm gamble after that night.

I often wondered what brought Mrs Malcolm to our clachan, instead of going to a populous town, where she might have taken up a huxtry-shop, as she was but of a silly constitution, the which would have been better for her than spinning from morning to far in the night, as if she was in verity drawing the thread of life. But it was, no doubt, from an honest pride to hide her poverty; for when her daughter Effie was ill with the measles—the poor lassie was very ill—nobody thought she could come through, and when she did get the turn, she was for many a day a heavy handful;—our session being rich, and nobody on it but cripple Tammy Daidles, that was at that time known through all the country side for begging on a horse, I thought it my duty to call upon Mrs Malcolm in a sympathizing way, and offer her some assistance, but she refused it.

“No, sir,” said she, “I canna take help from the poor’s-box, although it’s very true that I am in great need; for it might hereafter be cast up to my bairns, whom it may please God to restore to better circumstances when I am no to see’t; but I would fain borrow five pounds, and if, sir, you will write to Mr Maitland, that is now the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and tell him that Marion Shaw would be obliged to him for the lend of that soom, I think he will not fail to send it.”

I wrote the letter that night to Provost Maitland, and, by the retour of the post, I got an answer, with twenty pounds for Mrs Malcolm, saying, “That it was with sorrow he heard so small a trifle could be serviceable.” When I took the letter and the money, which was in a bank-bill, she said, “This is just like himsel’.” She then told me that Mr Maitland had been a gentleman’s son of the east country, but driven out of his father’s house, when a laddie, by his stepmother; and that he had served as a servant lad with her father, who was the Laird of Yillcogie, but ran through his estate, and left her, his only daughter, in little better than beggary with her auntie, the mother of Captain Malcolm, her husband that was. Provost Maitland in his servitude had ta’en a notion of her; and when he recovered his patrimony, and had become a great Glasgow merchant, on hear-

ing how she was left by her father, he offered to marry her, but she had promised herself to her cousin the Captain, whose widow she was. He then married a rich lady, and in time grew, as he was, Lord Provost of the city; but his letter with the twenty pounds to me, showed that he had not forgotten his first love. It was a short, but a well-written letter, in a fair hand of write, containing much of the true gentleman; and Mrs Malcolm said, "Who knows but out of the regard he once had for their mother, he may do something for my five helpless orphans."

Thirdly, Upon the subject of taking my cousin, Miss Betty Lanshaw, for my first wife, I have little to say.—It was more out of a compassionate habitual affection, than the passion of love. We were brought up by our grandmother in the same house, and it was a thing spoken of from the beginning, that Betty and me were to be married. So, when she heard that the Laird of Breadland had given me the presentation of Dalmailing, she began to prepare for the wedding; and as soon as the placing was well over, and the manse in order, I gaed to Ayr, where she was, and we were quietly married, and came home in a chaise, bringing with us her little brother Andrew, that died in the East Indies, and he lived and was brought up by us.

Now, this is all, I think, that happened in that year worthy of being mentioned, except that at the sacrament, when old Mr Kilfuddy was preaching in the tent, it came on such a thunder-plump, that there was not a single soul stayed in the kirkyard to hear him; for the which he was greatly mortified, and never after came to our preachings.

CHAPTER II.—YEAR 1761.

THE GREAT INCREASE OF SMUGGLING—MR BALWHIDDER DISPERSES A TEA-DRINKING PARTY OF GOSSIPS—HE RECORDS THE VIRTUES OF NANSE BANKS, THE SCHOOL-MISTRESS—THE SERVANT OF A MILITARY MAN, WHO HAD BEEN PRISONER IN FRANCE, COMES INTO THE PARISH, AND OPENS A DANCING-SCHOOL.

It was in this year that the great smuggling trade corrupted all the west coast, especially the laigh lands about the Troon and

the Loans. The tea was going like the chaff, the brandy like well-water, and the wastrie of all things was terrible. There was nothing minded but the riding of cadgers by day, and excisemen by night—and battles between the smugglers and the king's men, both by sea and land. There was a continual drunkenness and debauchery; and our session, that was but on the lip of this whirlpool of iniquity, had an awful time o't. I did all that was in the power of nature to keep my people from the contagion: I preached sixteen times from the text, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." I visited, and I exhorted; I warned, and I prophesied; I told them that, although the money came in like slate stones, it would go like the snow off the dyke. But for all I could do, the evil got in among us, and we had no less than three contested bastard bairns upon our hands at one time, which was a thing never heard of in a parish of the shire of Ayr since the Reformation. Two of the bairns, after no small sifting and searching, we got fathered at last; but the third, that was by Meg Glaiks, and given to one Rab Rickerton, was utterly refused, though the fact was not denied; but he was a termagant fellow, and snappit his fingers at the elders. The next day he listed in the Scotch Greys, who were then quartered at Ayr, and we never heard more of him, but thought he had been slain in battle, till one of the parish, about three years since, went up to London to lift a legacy from a cousin that died among the Hindoos. When he was walking about, seeing the curiosities, and among others Chelsea Hospital, he happened to speak to some of the invalids, who found out from his tongue that he was a Scotchman; and speaking to the invalids, one of them, a very old man, with a grey head and a leg of timber, inquired what part of Scotland he was come from; and when he mentioned my parish, the invalid gave a great shout, and said he was from the same place himself; and who should this old man be, but the very identical Rab Rickerton, that was art and part in Meg Glaiks' disowned bairn. Then they had a long converse together, and he had come through many hardships, but had turned out a good soldier; and so, in his old days, was an in-door pensioner, and very comfortable; and he said that he had, to be sure, spent his youth in the devil's service,

and his manhood in the king's, but his old age was given to that of his Maker, which I was blithe and thankful to hear; and he enquired about many a one in the parish, the blooming and the green of his time, but they were all dead and buried; and he had a contrite and penitent spirit, and read his Bible every day, delighting most in the Book of Joshua, the Chronicles, and the Kings.

Before this year, the drinking of tea was little known in the parish, saving among a few of the heritors' houses on a Sabbath evening; but now it became very rife: yet the commoner sort did not like to let it be known that they were taking to the new luxury, especially the elderly women, who, for that reason, had their ploys in out-houses and by-places, just as the witches lang syne had their sinful possets and galravitchings; and they made their tea for common in the pint-stoup, and drank it out of caps and luggies, for there were but few among them that had cups and saucers. . Well do I remember one night in harvest, in this very year, as I was taking my twilight dauner aneath the hedge along the back side of Thomas Thorl's yard, meditating on the goodness of Providence, and looking at the sheaves of victual on the field, that I heard his wife, and two three other carlins, with their Bohea in the inside of the hedge, and no doubt but it had a lacing of the cone,* for they were all cracking like pen-guns. But I gave them a sign, by a loud host, that Providence sees all, and it skailed the bike; for I heard them, like guilty creatures, whispering, and gathering up their truck-pots and trenchers, and cowering away home.

It was in this year that Patrick Dilworth, (he had been schoolmaster of the parish from the time, as his wife said, of Anna Regina, and before the Rexes came to the crown,) was disabled by a paralytic, and the heritors, grudging the cost of another schoolmaster as long as he lived, would not allow the session to get his place supplied, which was a wrong thing, I must say, of them; for the children of the parishioners were obliged, therefore, to go to the neighbouring towns for their schooling, and the custom was to take a piece of bread and

cheese in their pockets for dinner, and to return in the evening always voracious for more, the long walk helping the natural crave of their young appetites. In this way Mrs Malcolm's two eldest laddies, Charlie and Robert, were wont to go to Irville, and it was soon seen that they kept themselves aloof from the other callans in the clachan, and had a genteeler turn than the grulshy bairns of the cottars. Her bit lassies, Kate and Effie, were better off; for some years before, Nanse Banks had taken up a teaching in a garret-room of a house, at the corner where John Bayne has biggit the selate-house for his grocery-shop. Nanse learnt them reading and working stockings, and how to sew the semplar, for twal-pennies a-week. She was a patient creature, well cut out for her calling, with blear een, a pale face, and a long neck, but meek and contented withal, tholing the dule of this world with a Christian submission of the spirit; and her garret-room was a cordial of cleanliness, for she made the scholars set the house in order, time and time about, every morning; and it was a common remark for many a day, that the lassies, who had been at Nanse Banks's school, were always well spoken of, both for their civility, and the trig-ness of their houses when they were afterwards married. In short, I do not know, that in all the long epoch of my ministry, any individual body did more to improve the ways of the parishioners, in their domestic concerns, than did that worthy and innocent creature, Nanse Banks, the schoolmistress; and she was a great loss when she was removed, as it is to be hoped, to a better world; but anent this I shall have to speak more at large hereafter.

It was in this year that my patron, the Laird of Breadland, departed this life, and I preached his funeral sermon; but he was non-beloved in the parish; for my people never forgave him for putting me upon them, although they began to be more on a familiar footing with myself. This was partly owing to my first wife, Betty Lanshaw, who was an active throughgoing woman, and wonderfu' useful to many of the cottars' wives at their lying-in; and when a death happened among them, her helping hand, and any thing we had at the manse, was never wanting; and I went about myself to the bedside of the frail,

leaving no stone unturned to win the affections of my people, which, by the blessing of the Lord, in process of time, was brought to a bearing.

But a thing happened in this year, which deserves to be recorded, as manifesting what effect the smuggling was beginning to take in the morals of the country side. One Mr Macskipnish, of Highland parentage, who had been a valet-de-chambre with a major in the campaigns, and taken a prisoner with him by the French, he having come home in a cartel, took up a dancing-school at Irville, the which art he had learnt in the genteelst fashion, in the mode of Paris, at the French court. Such a thing as a dancing-school had never, in the memory of man, been known in our country side; and there was such a sound about the steps and cottillions of Mr Macskipnish, that every lad and lass, that could spare time and siller, went to him, to the great neglect of their work. The very bairns on the loan, instead of their wonted play, gaed linking and louping in the steps of Mr Macskipnish, who was, to be sure, a great curiosity, with long spindle legs, his breast shot out like a duck's, and his head powdered and frizzled up like a tappit-hen. He was, indeed, the proudest peacock that could be seen, and he had a ring on his finger, and when he came to drink his tea at the Breadland, he brought no hat on his head, but a droll cockit thing under his arm, which, he said, was after the manner of the courtiers at the petty suppers of one Madam Pompadour, who was at that time the concubine of the French king.

I do not recollect any other remarkable thing that happened in this year. The harvest was very abundant, and the meal so cheap, that it caused a great defect in my stipend; so that I was obligated to postpone the purchase of a mahogany scrutoire for my study, as I had intended. But I had not the heart to complain of this: on the contrary, I rejoiced thereat; for what made me want my scrutoire till another year, had carried blitheness into the hearth of the cottar, and made the widow's heart sing with joy; and I would have been an unnatural creature, had I not joined in the universal gladness, because plenty did abound.

CHAPTER III.—YEAR 1762.

RAVOC PRODUCED BY THE SMALLPOX—CHARLES MALCOLM IS SENT OFF A CABIN-BOY, ON A VOYAGE TO VIRGINIA—MIZY SPAEWELL DIES ON HALLOWE'EN—TEA BEGINS TO BE ADMITTED AT THE MANSE, BUT THE MINISTER CONTINUES TO EXERT HIS AUTHORITY AGAINST SMUGGLING.

THE third year of my ministry was long held in remembrance for several very memorable things. William Byres of the Loan-head had a cow that calved two calves at one calving; Mrs Byres, the same year, had twins, male and female; and there was such a crop on his fields, testifying that the Lord never sends a mouth into the world without providing meat for it. But what was thought a very daunting sign of something, happened on the Sacrament Sabbath at the conclusion of the action sermon, when I had made a very suitable discourse. The day was tempestuous, and the wind blew with such a pith and birr, that I thought it would have twirled the trees in the kirkyard out by the roots, and, blowing in this manner, it tirl'd the thack from the rigging of the manse stable; and the same blast that did that, took down the lead that was on the kirk-roof, which hurled off, as I was saying, at the conclusion of the action sermon, with such a dreadful sound, as the like was never heard, and all the congregation thought that it betokened a mutation to me. However, nothing particular happened to me; but the smallpox came in among the weans of the parish, and the smashing that it made of the poor bits o' bairns was indeed woeful.

One Sabbath, when the pestilence was raging, I preached a sermon about Rachel weeping for her children, which Thomas Thorl, who was surely a great judge of good preaching, said, "was a monument of divinity whilk searched the heart of many a parent that day;" a thing I was well pleased to hear, for Thomas, as I have related at length, was the most zealous champion against my getting the parish; but, from this time, I set him down in my mind for the next vacancy among the elders. Worthy man! it was not permitted him to arrive at that honour. In the fall of that year he took an income in his legs, and couldna

go about, and was laid up for the remainder of his days, a perfect Lazarus, by the fireside. But he was well supported in his affliction. In due season, when it pleased HIM that alone can give and take, to pluck him from this life, as the fruit ripened and ready for the gathering, his death, to all that knew him, was a gentle dispensation, for truly he had been in sore trouble.

It was in this year that Charlie Malcolm, Mrs Malcolm's eldest son, was sent to be a cabin-boy in the Tobacco trader, a three-masted ship, that sailed between Port-Glasgow and Virginia in America. She was commanded by Captain Dickie, an Irville man ; for at that time the Clyde was supplied with the best sailors from our coast, the coal-trade with Ireland being a better trade for bringing up good mariners than the long voyages in the open sea ; which was the reason, as I often heard said, why the Clyde shipping got so many of their men from our country side. The going to sea of Charlie Malcolm was, on divers accounts, a very remarkable thing to us all ; for he was the first that ever went from our parish, in the memory of man, to be a sailor, and every body was concerned at it, and some thought it was a great venture of his mother to let him, his father having been lost at sea. But what could the forlorn widow do ? She had five weans, and little to give them ; and, as she herself said, he was aye in the hand of his Maker, go where he might ; and the will of God would be done, in spite of all earthly wiles and devices to the contrary.

On the Monday morning, when Charlie was to go away to meet the Irville carrier on the road, we were all up, and I walked by myself from the manse into the clachan to bid him farewell, and I met him just coming from his mother's door, as blithe as a bee, in his sailor's dress, with a stick, and a bundle tied in a Barcelona silk handkerchief hanging o'er his shoulder, and his two little brothers were with him, and his sisters, Kate and Effie, looking out from the door all begreeten ; but his mother was in the house, praying to the Lord to protect her orphan, as she afterwards told me. All the weans of the clachan were gathered at the kirkyard yett to see him pass, and they gave him three great shouts as he was going by ; and every body was at their doors, and said something encouraging to

him; but there was a great laugh when auld Mizy Spaewell came hirpling with her baucle in her hand, and flung it after him for good-luck. Mizy had a wonderful faith in freats, and was just an oracle of sagacity at expounding dreams, and bodes of every sort and description—besides, she was reckoned one of the best howdies in her day; but by this time she was grown frail and feckless, and she died the same year on Hallowe'en, which made every body wonder that it should have so fallen out for her to die on Hallowe'en.

Shortly after the departure of Charlie Malcolm, the Lady of Breadland, with her three daughters, removed to Edinburgh, where the young laird, that had been my pupil, was learning to be an advocate, and the Breadland-house was set to Major Gilchrist, a nabob from India; but he was a narrow ailing man, and his maiden-sister, Miss Girzie, was the scrimpetest creature that could be; so that, in their hands, all the pretty policy of the Breadlands, that had cost a power of money to the old laird that was my patron, fell into decay and disorder; and the bonny yew-trees that were cut into the shape of peacocks, soon grew out of all shape, and are now doleful monuments of the major's tack, and that of Lady Skimmilk, as Miss Girzie Gilchrist, his sister, was nicknamed by every ane that kent her.

But it was not so much on account of the neglect of the Breadland, that the incoming of Major Gilchrist was to be deplored. The old men that had a light labour in keeping the policy in order, were thrown out of bread, and could do little; and the poor women that whiles got a bit and a drap from the kitchen of the family, soon felt the change, so that by little and little we were obligated to give help from the session; insomuch that, before the end of the year, I was necessitated to preach a discourse on almsgiving, specially for the benefit of our own poor, a thing never before known in the parish.

But one good thing came from the Gilchrists to Mrs Malcolm. Miss Girzie, whom they called Lady Skimmilk, had been in a very penurious way as a seamstress, in the Gorbals of Glasgow, while her brother was making the fortune in India, and she was a clever needle-woman—none better, as it was said; and she, having some things to make, took Kate Malcolm to help her in the

coarse work ; and Kate, being a nimble and birky thing, was so useful to the lady, and the complaining man the major, that they invited her to stay with them at the Breadland for the winter, where, although she was holden to her seam from morning to night, her food lightened the hand of her mother, who, for the first time since her coming into the parish, found the penny for the day's darg more than was needed for the meal-basin ; and the tea-drinking was beginning to spread more openly, insomuch that, by the advice of the first Mrs Balwhidder, Mrs Malcolm took in tea to sell, and in this way was enabled to eke something to the small profits of her wheel. Thus the tide that had been so long ebbing to her, began to turn ; and here I am bound in truth to say, that although I never could abide the smuggling, both on its own account, and the evils that grew therefrom to the country side, I lost some of my dislike to the tea after Mrs Malcolm began to traffic in it, and we then had it for our breakfast in the morning at the manse, as well as in the afternoon. But what I thought most of it for was, that it did no harm to the head of the drinkers, which was not always the case with the possets that were in fashion before. There is no meeting now in the summer evenings, as I remember often happened in my younger days, with decent ladies coming home with red faces, tosy and cosh, from a posset-masking ; so, both for its temperance and on account of Mrs Malcolm's sale, I refrained from the November in this year to preach against tea ; but I never lifted the weight of my displeasure from off the smuggling trade, until it was utterly put down by the strong hand of government.

There was no other thing of note in this year, saving only that I planted in the garden the big pear-tree, which had the two great branches that we call the Adam and Eve. I got the plant, then a sapling, from Mr Graft, that was Lord Eaglesham's head-gardener ; and he said it was, as indeed all the parish now knows well, a most juicy sweet pear, such as was not known in Scotland till my lord brought down the father plant from the king's garden in London, in the forty-five, when he went up to testify his loyalty to the House of Hanover.

CHAPTER IV.—YEAR 1763.

CHARLES MALCOLM'S RETURN FROM SEA—KATE MALCOLM IS TAKEN TO LIVE WITH
LADY MACADAM—DEATH OF THE FIRST MRS BALWHIDDER.

THE An. Dom. 1763, was, in many a respect, a memorable year, both in public and in private. The King granted peace to the French, and Charlie Malcolm, that went to sea in the Tobacco trader, came home to see his mother. The ship, after being at America, had gone down to Jamaica, an island in the West Indies, with a cargo of live lumber, as Charlie told me himself, and had come home with more than a hundred and fifty hoggits of sugar, and sixty-three puncheons full of rum; for she was, by all accounts, a stately galley, and almost two hundred tons in the burthen, being the largest vessel then sailing from the creditable town of Port-Glasgow. Charlie was not expected; and his coming was a great thing to us all, so I will mention the whole particulars.

One evening, towards the gloaming, as I was taking my walk of meditation, I saw a brisk sailor laddie coming towards me. He had a pretty green parrot sitting on a bundle, tied in a Barcelona silk handkerchief, which he carried with a stick over his shoulder, and in this bundle was a wonderful big nut, such as no one in our parish had ever seen. It was called a cocker-nut. This blithe callant was Charlie Malcolm, who had come all the way that day his leeful lane, on his own legs from Greenock, where the Tobacco trader was then 'livering her cargo. I told him how his mother, and his brothers, and his sisters were all in good health, and went to convoy him home; and as we were going along, he told me many curious things, and he gave me six beautiful yellow limes, that he had brought in his pouch all the way across the seas, for me to make a bowl of punch with, and I thought more of them than if they had been golden guineas, it was so mindful of the laddie.

When we got to the door of his mother's house, she was sitting at the fireside, with her three other bairns at their bread and milk, Kate being then with Lady Skimmilk, at the Breadland,

sewing. It was between the day and dark, when the shuttle stands still till the lamp is lighted. But such a shout of joy and thankfulness as rose from that hearth, when Charlie went in ! The very parrot, ye would have thought, was a participator, for the beast gied a skraik that made my whole head dirl ; and the neighbours came flying and flocking to see what was the matter, for it was the first parrot ever seen within the bounds of the parish, and some thought it was but a foreign hawk, with a yellow head and green feathers.

In the midst of all this, Effie Malcolm had run off to the Breadland for her sister Kate, and the two lassies came flying breathless, with Miss Girzie Gilchrist, the Lady Skimmilk, pursuing them like desperation, or a griffin, down the avenue ; for Kate, in her hurry, had flung down her seam, a new printed gown, that she was helping to make, and it had fallen into a boyne of milk that was ready for the creaming, by which ensued a double misfortune to Miss*Girzie, the gown being not only ruined, but licking up the cream. For this, poor Kate was not allowed ever to set her face in the Breadland again.

When Charlie Malcolm had stayed about a week with his mother, he returned to his berth in the Tobacco trader, and shortly after his brother Robert was likewise sent to serve his time to the sea, with an owner that was master of his own bark, in the coal trade at Irville. Kate, who was really a surprising lassie for her years, was taken off her mother's hands by the old Lady Macadam, that lived in her jointure house, which is now the Cross Keys Inns. Her ladyship was a woman of high breeding, her husband having been a great general, and knighted by the king for his exploits ; but she was lame, and could not move about in her dining-room without help ; so hearing from the first Mrs Balwhidder how Kate had done such an unatonable deed to Miss Girzie Gilchrist, she sent for Kate, and, finding her sharp and apt, she took her to live with her as a companion. This was a vast advantage, for the lady was versed in all manner of accomplishments, and could read and speak French with more ease than any professor at that time in the College of Glasgow ; and she had learnt to sew flowers on satin, either in a nunnery abroad, or in a boarding-school in England, and

took pleasure in teaching Kate all she knew, and how to behave herself like a lady.

In the summer of this year, old Mr Patrick Dilworth, that had so long been doited with the paralytics, died, and it was a great relief to my people, for the heritors could no longer refuse to get a proper schoolmaster ; so we took on trial Mr Lorimore, who has ever since the year after, with so much credit to himself, and usefulness to the parish, been schoolmaster, session-clerk, and precentor—a man of great mildness, and extraordinary particularity. He was then a very young man, and some objection was made, on account of his youth, to his being session-clerk, especially as the smuggling immorality still gave us much trouble in the making up of irregular marriages ; but his discretion was greater than could have been hoped for from his years ; and, after a twelvemonth's probation in the capacity of schoolmaster, he was installed in all the offices that had belonged to his predecessor, old Mr Patrick Dilworth that was.

But the most memorable thing that befell among my people this year, was the burning of the lint-mill on the Lugton water, which happened, of all the days of the year, on the very self-same day that Miss Girzie Gilchrist, better known as Lady Skimmilk, hired the chaise from Mrs Watts of the New Inns of Irville, to go with her brother, the major, to consult the faculty in Edinburgh concerning his complaints. For, as the chaise was coming by the mill, William Huckle, the miller that was, came flying out of the mill like a demented man, crying fire!—and it was the driver that brought the melancholy tidings to the clachan—and melancholy they were ; for the mill was utterly destroyed, and in it not a little of all that year's crop of lint in our parish. The first Mrs Balwhidder lost upwards of twelve stone, which we had raised on the glebe with no small pains, watering it in the drouth, as it was intended for sarking to ourselves, and sheets and napery. A great loss indeed it was, and the vexation thereof had a visible effect on Mrs Balwhidder's health, which from the spring had been in a dwining way. But for it, I think she might have wrestled through the winter : however, it was ordered otherwise, and she was removed from mine to Abraham's bosom on Christmas-day, and buried on

Hogmanay, for it was thought uncanny to have a dead corpse in the house on the new-year's day. She was a worthy woman, studying with all her capacity to win the hearts of my people towards me—in the which good work she prospered greatly; so that, when she died, there was not a single soul in the parish that was not contented with both my walk and conversation. Nothing could be more peaceable than the way we lived together. Her brother Andrew, a fine lad, I had sent to the college at Glasgow, at my own cost; and when he came out to the burial, he stayed with me a month, for the manse after her decease was very dull, and it was during this visit that he gave me an inkling of his wish to go out to India as a cadet, but the transactions anent that fall within the scope of another year—as well as what relates to her headstone, and the epitaph in metre, which I indicated myself thereon; John Truel the mason carving the same, as may be seen in the kirkyard, where it wants a little reparation and setting upright, having settled the wrong way when the second Mrs Balwhidder was laid by her side.—But I must not here enter upon an anticipation.

CHAPTER V.—YEAR 1764.

HE GETS A HEADSTONE FOR MRS BALWHIDDER, AND WRITES AN EPITAPH FOR IT
—HE IS AFFLICTED WITH MELANCHOLY, AND THINKS OF WRITING A BOOK—NICHOL
SNIPE THE GAMEKEEPER'S DEVICE WHEN REPROVED IN CHURCH.

THIS year well deserved the name of the monumental year in our parish; for the young laird of the Breadland, that had been my pupil, being learning to be an advocate among the faculty in Edinburgh, with his lady mother, who had removed thither with the young ladies her daughters, for the benefit of education, sent out to be put up in the kirk, under the loft over the family vault, an elegant marble headstone, with an epitaph engraven thereon, in fair Latin, setting forth many excellent qualities which the old laird, my patron that was, the inditer thereof said he possessed. I say the inditer, because it could-

na have been the young laird himself, although he got the credit o't on the stone, for he was nae daub in my aught at the Latin or any other language. However, he might improve himself at Edinburgh, where a' manner of genteel things were then to be got at an easy rate, and doubtless the young laird got a probationer at the College to write the epitaph; but I have often wondered sin' syne, how he came to make it in Latin, for assuredly his dead parent, if he could have seen it, could not have read a single word o't, notwithstanding it was so vaunty about his virtues, and other civil and hospitable qualifications.

The coming of the laird's monumental stone had a great effect on me, then in a state of deep despondency for the loss of the first Mrs Balwhidder; and I thought I could not do a better thing, just by way of diversion in my heavy sorrow, than to get a well-shapen headstone made for her—which, as I have hinted at in the record of the last year, was done and set up. But a headstone without an epitaph, is no better than a body without the breath of life in't; and so it behoved me to make a poesy for the monument, the which I conned and pondered upon for many days. I thought as Mrs Balwhidder, worthy woman as she was, did not understand the Latin tongue, it would not do to put on what I had to say in that language, as the laird had done—nor indeed would it have been easy, as I found upon the experimenting, to tell what I had to tell in Latin, which is naturally a crabbed language, and very difficult to write properly. I therefore, after mentioning her age and the dates of her birth and departure, composed in sedate poetry the following epitaph, which may yet be seen on the tombstone.

EPITAPH.

A lovely Christian, spouse, and friend,
Pleasant in life, and at her end.—
A pale consumption dealt the blow
That laid her here, with dust below.
Sore was the cough that shook her frame;
That cough her patience did proclaim—
And as she drew her latest breath,
She said, "The Lord is sweet in death."

O pious reader ! standing by,
 Learn like this gentle one to die.
 The grass doth grow and fade away,
 And time runs out by night and day ;
 The King of Terrors has command
 To strike us with his dart in hand.
 Go where we will by flood or field,
 He will pursue and make us yield.
 But though to him we must resign
 The vesture of our part divine,
 There is a jewel in our trust,
 That will not perish in the dust,
 A pearl of price, a precious gem,
 Ordained for Jesus' diadem ;
 Therefore, be holy while you can,
 And think upon the doom of man.
 Repent in time and sin no more,
 That when the strife of life is o'er,
 On wings of love your soul may rise,
 To dwell with angels in the skies,
 Where psalms are sung eternally,
 And martyrs ne'er again shall die ;
 But with the saints still bask in bliss,
 And drink the cup of blessedness.

This was greatly thought of at the time, and Mr Lorimore, who had a nerve for poesy himself in his younger years, was of opinion that it was so much to the purpose, and suitable withal, that he made his scholars write it out for their examination copies, at the reading whereof before the heritors, when the examination of the school came round, the tear came into my eye, and every one present sympathized with me in my great affliction for the loss of the first Mrs Balwhidder.

Andrew Lanshaw, as I have recorded, having come from the Glasgow College to the burial of his sister, my wife that was, stayed with me a month to keep me company ; and staying with me, he was a great cordial, for the weather was wet and sleety, and the nights were stormy, so that I could go little out, and few of the elders came in, they being at that time old men in a feckless condition, not at all qualified to warsle with the blasts of winter. But when Andrew left me to go back to his classes, I was eerie and lonesome ; and but for the getting of the monument ready, which was a blessed entertainment to me in those dreary nights, with consulting anent the

shape of it with John Truel, and meditating on the verse for the epitaph, I might have gone altogether demented. However, it pleased HIM, who is the surety of the sinner, to help me through the Slough of Despond, and to set my feet on firm land, establishing my way thereon.

But the work of the monument, and the epitaph, could not endure for a constancy, and after it was done, I was again in great danger of sinking into the hypochonderies a second time. However, I was enabled to fight with my affliction, and by-and-by, as the spring began to open her green lattice, and to set out her flower-pots to the sunshine, and the time of the singing of birds was come, I became more composed, and like myself, so I often walked in the fields, and held communion with nature, and wondered at the mysteries thereof.

On one of these occasions, as I was sauntering along the edge of Eaglesham-wood, looking at the industrious bee going from flower to flower, and the idle butterfly, that layeth up no store, but perisheth ere it is winter, I felt as it were a spirit from on high descending upon me, a throb at my heart, and a thrill in my brain, and I was transported out of myself, and seized with the notion of writing a book—but what it should be about, I could not settle to my satisfaction. Sometimes I thought of an orthodox poem, like *Paradise Lost*, by John Milton, wherein I proposed to treat more at large of Original Sin, and the great mystery of Redemption; at others, I fancied that a connect treatise on the efficacy of Free Grace would be more taking; but although I made divers beginnings in both subjects, some new thought ever came into my head, and the whole summer passed away and nothing was done. I therefore postponed my design of writing a book till the winter, when I would have the benefit of the long nights. Before that, however, I had other things of more importance to think about. My servant lasses, having no eye of a mistress over them, wastered every thing at such a rate, and made such a galravitching in the house, that, long before the end of the year, the year's stipend was all spent, and I did not know what to do. At lang and length I mustered courage to send for Mr Auld, who was then living, and an elder. He was a douce and discreet man, fair and well-doing in the

world, and had a better handful of strong common sense than many even of the heritors. So I told him how I was situated, and conferred with him; and he advised me, for my own sake, to look out for another wife as soon as decency would allow, which he thought might very properly be after the turn of the year, by which time the first Mrs Balwhidder would be dead more than twelve months; and when I mentioned my design to write a book, he said, (and he was a man of good discretion,) that the doing of the book was a thing that would keep, but wasterful servants were a growing evil; so, upon his counselling, I resolved not to meddle with the book till I was married again, but employ the interim, between then and the turn of the year, in looking out for a prudent woman to be my second wife, strictly intending, as I did perform, not to mint a word about my choice, if I made one, till the whole twelve months and a day, from the date of the first Mrs Balwhidder's interment, had run out.

In this the hand of Providence was very visible, and lucky for me it was that I had sent for Mr Auld when I did send, as the very week following, a sound began to spread in the parish, that one of my lassies had got herself with bairn, which was an awful thing to think had happened in the house of her master, and that master a minister of the gospel. Some there were, for backbiting appertaineth to all conditions, that jealoused and wondered if I had not a finger in the pie; which, when Mr Auld heard, he bestirred himself in such a manful and godly way in my defence, as silenced the clash, telling that I was utterly incapable of any such thing, being a man of a guileless heart, and a spiritual simplicity, that would be ornamental in a child. We then had the latheron summoned before the session, and was not long of making her confess that the father was Nichol Snipe, Lord Glencairn's gamekeeper; and both her and Nichol were obligated to stand in the kirk: but Nichol was a graceless reprobate, for he came with two coats, one buttoned behind him, and another buttoned before him, and two wigs of my lord's, lent him by the valet-de-chamer; the one over his face, and the other in the right way; and he stood with his face to the church-wall. When I saw him from the poopit, I said to him—"Nichol, you must turn your face towards me!" At the which, he turned round to be

sure, but there he presented the same show as his back. I was confounded, and did not know what to say, but cried out with a voice of anger—"Nichol, Nichol! if ye had been a' back, ye wouldna hae been there this day;" which had such an effect on the whole congregation, that the poor fellow suffered afterwards more derision, than if I had rebuked him in the manner prescribed by the session.

This affair, with the previous advice of Mr Auld, was, however, a warning to me, that no pastor of his parish should be long without a helpmate. Accordingly, as soon as the year was out, I set myself earnestly about the search for one; but as the particulars fall properly within the scope and chronicle of the next year, I must reserve them for it; and I do not recollect that any thing more particular befell in this, excepting that William Mutchkins, the father of Mr Mutchkins, the great spirit-dealer in Glasgow, set up a change-house in the clachan, which was the first in the parish, and which, if I could have helped, would have been the last; for it was opening a howf to all manner of wickedness, and was an immediate get and offspring of the smuggling trade, against which I had so set my countenance. But William Mutchkins himself was a respectable man, and no house could be better ordered than his change. At a stated hour he made family worship, for he brought up his children in the fear of God and the Christian religion; and although the house was full, he would go in to the customers, and ask them if they would want any thing for half an hour, for that he was going to make exercise with his family; and many a wayfaring traveller has joined in the prayer. There is no such thing, I fear, now-a-days, of publicans entertaining travellers in this manner.

CHAPTER VI.—YEAR 1765.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A WHISKY DISTILLERY—HE IS AGAIN MARRIED TO MISS LIZY KIBBOCK—HER INDUSTRY IN THE DAIRY—HER EXAMPLE DIFFUSES A SPIRIT OF INDUSTRY THROUGH THE PARISH.

As there was little in the last year that concerned the parish, but only myself, so in this the like fortune continued; and saving a rise in the price of barley, occasioned, as was thought, by the establishment of a house for brewing whisky in a neighbouring parish, it could not be said that my people were exposed to the mutations and influences of the stars, which ruled in the seasons of Ann. Dom. 1765. In the winter there was a dearth of fuel, such as has not been since; for when the spring loosened the bonds of the ice, three new coal-heughs were shanked in the Douray moor, and ever since there has been a great plenty of that necessary article. Truly, it is very wonderful to see how things come round. When the talk was about the shanking of their heughs, and a paper to get folk to take shares in them, was carried through the circumjacent parishes, it was thought a gowk's errand; but no sooner was the coal reached, but up sprung such a traffic, that it was a godsend to the parish, and the opening of a trade and commerce, that has, to use an old byword, brought gold in gowpins amang us. From that time my stipend has been on the regular increase, and therefore I think that the incoming of the heritors must have been in like manner augmented.

Soon after this, the time was drawing near for my second marriage. I had placed my affections, with due consideration, on Miss Lizy Kibbock, the well brought-up daughter of Mr Joseph Kibbock of the Gorbyholm, who was the first that made a speculation in the farming way in Ayrshire, and whose cheese were of such an excellent quality, that they have, under the name of Delap-cheese, spread far and wide over the civilized world. Miss Lizy and me were married on the 29th day of April, with some inconvenience to both sides, on account of the dread that we had of being married in May; for it is said—

“Of the marriages in May,
The bairns die of a decay.”

However, married we were, and we hired the Irville chaise, and with Miss Jenny her sister, and Becky Cairns her niece, who sat on a portmanty at our feet, we went on a pleasure jaunt to Glasgow, where we bought a miracle of useful things for the manse, that neither the first Mrs Balwhidder nor me ever thought of; but the second Mrs Balwhidder that was, had a geni for management, and it was extraordinary what she could go through. Well may I speak of her with commendations; for she was the bee that made my honey, although at first things did not go so clear with us. For she found the manse rookit and herrit, and there was such a supply of plenishing of all sort wanted, that I thought myself ruined and undone by her care and industry. There was such a buying of wool to make blankets, with a booming of the meikle wheel to spin the same, and such birring of the little wheel for sheets and napery, that the manse was for many a day like an organ kist. Then we had milk cows, and the calves to bring up, and a kirning of butter, and a making of cheese; in short, I was almost by myself with the jangle and din, which prevented me from writing a book as I had proposed, and I for a time thought of the peaceful and kindly nature of the first Mrs Balwhidder with a sigh; but the outcoming was soon manifest. The second Mrs Balwhidder sent her butter on the market-days to Irville, and her cheese from time to time to Glasgow, to Mrs Firilot, that kept the huxtry in the Saltmarket; and they were both so well made, that our dairy was just a coining of money, insomuch that, after the first year, we had the whole tot of my stipend to put untouched into the bank.

But I must say, that although we were thus making siller like selate stones, I was not satisfied in my own mind that I had got the manse merely to be a factory of butter and cheese, and to breed up veal calves for the slaughter; so I spoke to the second Mrs Balwhidder, and pointed out to her what I thought the error of our way; but she had been so ingrained with the profitable management of cows and grumphies in her father's house, that she could not desist. at the which I was greatly

grieved. By-and-by, however, I began to discern that there was something as good in her example, as the giving of alms to the poor folk; for all the wives of the parish were stirred up by it into a wonderful thrift, and nothing was heard of in every house, but of quiltings and wabs to weave; insomuch that, before many years came round, there was not a better stocked parish, with blankets and napery, than mine was, within the bounds of Scotland.

It was about the Michaelmas of this year that Mrs Malcolm opened her shop, which she did chiefly on the advice of Mrs Balwhidder, who said it was far better to allow a little profit on the different haberdasheries that might be wanted, than to send to the neighbouring towns an end's errand on purpose for them, none of the lasses that were so sent ever thinking of making less than a day's play on every such occasion. In a word, it is not to be told how the second Mrs Balwhidder, my wife, showed the value of flying time, even to the concerns of this world, and was the mean of giving a life and energy to the housewifery of the parish, that has made many a one beek his shins in comfort, that would otherwise have had but a cold coal to blow at. Indeed, Mr Kibbock, her father, was a man beyond the common, and had an insight of things, by which he was enabled to draw profit and advantage, where others could only see risk and detriment. He planted mounts of fir-trees on the bleak and barren tops of the hills of his farm, the which every body, and I among the rest, considered as a thrashing of the water and raising of bells. But as his tack ran his trees grew, and the plantations supplied him with stabs to make *stake and rice* between his fields, which soon gave them a trig and orderly appearance, such as had never before been seen in the west country; and his example has, in this matter, been so followed, that I have heard travellers say, who have been in foreign countries, that the shire of Ayr, for its bonny round green plantings on the tops of the hills, is above comparison either with Italy or Switzerland, where the hills are, as it were, in a state of nature.

Upon the whole, this was a busy year in the parish, and the seeds of many great improvements were laid. The king's road,

which then ran through the Vennel, was mended; but it was not till some years after, as I shall record by-and-by, that the trust-road, as it was called, was made, the which had the effect of turning the town inside out.

Before I conclude, it is proper to mention that the kirk-bell, which had to this time, from time immemorial, hung on an ash-tree, was one stormy night cast down by the breaking of the branch, which was the cause of the heritors agreeing to build the steeple. The clock was a mortification to the parish from the Lady Breadland, when she died some years after.

CHAPTER VII.—YEAR 1766.

THE BURNING OF THE BREADLAND—A NEW BELL, AND ALSO A STEEPLE—NANSE BIRREL FOUND DROWNED IN A WELL—THE PARISH TROUBLED WITH WILD IRISHMEN

It was in this Ann. Dom. that the great calamity happened, the which took place on a Sabbath evening in the month of February. Mrs Balwhidder had just infused or masket the tea, and we were set round the fireside, to spend the night in an orderly and religious manner, along with Mr and Mrs Petticrew, who were on a friendly visitation to the manse, the mistress being full cousin to Mrs Balwhidder.—Sitting, as I was saying, at our tea, one of the servant lasses came into the room with a sort of a panic laugh, and said, “What are ye all doing there when the Breadland’s in a low?”—“The Breadland in a low!” cried I.—“Oh, ay!” cried she; “bleezing at the windows and the rigging, and out at the lum, like a killogie.” Upon the which, we all went to the door, and there, to be sure, we did see that the Breadland was burning, the flames crackling high out o’er the trees, and the sparks flying like a comet’s tail in the firmament.

Seeing this sight, I said to Mr Petticrew, that, in the strength of the Lord, I would go and see what could be done, for it was as plain as the sun in the heavens that the ancient place of the Breadlands would be destroyed; whereupon he accorded to go

with me, and we walked at a lively course to the spot, and the people from all quarters were pouring in, and it was an awsome scene. But the burning of the house, and the droves of the multitude, were nothing to what we saw when we got forenent the place. There was the rafters crackling, the flames raging, the servants running, some with bedding, some with looking-glasses, and others with chamber utensils, as little likely to be fuel to the fire, but all testifications to the confusion and alarm. Then there was a shout, "Whar's Miss Girzie? whar's the Major?" The Major, poor man, soon cast up, lying upon a feather-bed, ill with his complaints, in the garden; but Lady Skimmilk was nowhere to be found. At last, a figure was seen in the upper flat, pursued by the flames, and that was Miss Girzie. Oh! it was a terrible sight to look at her in that jeopardy at the window, with her gold watch in the one hand and the silver teapot in the other, skreighing like desperation for a ladder and help. But, before a ladder or help could be found, the floor sunk down, and the roof fell in, and poor Miss Girzie, with her idols, perished in the burning. It was a dreadful business! I think, to this hour, how I saw her at the window, how the fire came in behind her, and claught her like a fiery Belzebub, and bore her into perdition before our eyes. The next morning the atomy of the body was found among the rubbish, with a piece of metal in what had been each of its hands, no doubt the gold watch and the silver teapot. Such was the end of Miss Girzie; and the Breadland, which the young laird, my pupil that was, by growing a resident at Edinburgh, never rebuilt. It was burnt to the very ground, nothing was spared but what the servants in the first flaught gathered up in a hurry and ran with; but no one could tell how the Major, who was then, as it was thought by the faculty, past the power of nature to recover, got out of the house, and was laid on the feather-bed in the garden. However, he never got the better of that night, and before Whitsunday he was dead too, and buried beside his sister's bones at the south side of the kirkyard dyke, where his cousin's son, that was his heir, erected the handsome monument, with the three urns and weeping cherubims, bearing witness to the great valour of the Major

among the Hindoos, as well as other commendable virtues, for which, as the epitaph says, he was universally esteemed and beloved, by all who knew him, in his public and private capacity.

But although the burning of the Breadland-House was justly called the great calamity, on account of what happened to Miss Girzie with her gold watch and silver teapot; yet, as Providence never fails to bring good out of evil, it turned out a catastrophe that proved advantageous to the parish; for the laird, instead of thinking to build it up, was advised to let the policy out as a farm, and the tack was taken by Mr Coulter, than whom there had been no such man in the agriculturing line among us before, not even excepting Mr Kibbock of the Gorbyholm, my father-in-law that was. Of the stabling, Mr Coulter made a comfortable dwelling-house; and having ruggut out the evergreens and other unprofitable plants, saving the two ancient yew-trees which the near-begaun Major and his sister had left to go to ruin about the mansion-house, he turned all to production, and it was wonderful what an increase he made the land bring forth. He was from far beyond Edinburgh, and had got his insight among the Lothian farmers, so that he knew what crop should follow another, and nothing could surpass the regularity of his rigs and furrows.—Well do I remember the admiration that I had, when, in a fine sunny morning of the first spring after he took the Breadland, I saw his braird on what had been the cows' grass, as even and pretty as if it had been worked and stripped in the loom with a shuttle. Truly, when I look back at the example he set, and when I think on the method and dexterity of his management, I must say, that his coming to the parish was a great godsend, and tended to do far more for the benefit of my people, than if the young laird had rebuilt the Breadland-House in a fashionable style, as was at one time spoken of.

But the year of the great calamity was memorable for another thing:—in the December foregoing, the wind blew, as I have recorded in the chronicle of the last year, and broke down the bough of the tree whereon the kirk-bell had hung from the time, as was supposed, of the persecution, before the bringing over of King William. Mr Kibbock, my father-in-law then that was,

CHAPTER VIII.—YEAR 1767.

LORD EAGLESHAM MEETS WITH AN ACCIDENT, WHICH IS THE MEANS OF GETTING THE PARISH A NEW ROAD—I PREACH FOR THE BENEFIT OF NANSE BANKS, THE SCHOOL-MISTRESS, REDUCED TO POVERTY.

ALL things in our parish were now beginning to shoot up into a great prosperity. The spirit of farming began to get the upper hand of the spirit of smuggling, and the coal-heughs that had been opened in the Douray, now brought a pour of money among us. In the manse, the thrift and frugality of the second Mrs Balwhidder throve exceedingly, so that we could save the whole stipend for the bank.

The king's highway, as I have related in the foregoing, ran through the Vennel, which was a narrow and a crooked street, with many big stones here and there, and every now and then, both in the spring and the fall, a gathering of middens for the fields; insomuch that the coal-carts from the Douray moor were often reested in the middle of the causey, and on more than one occasion some of them laired altogether in the middens, and others of them broke down. Great complaint was made by the carters anent these difficulties, and there was, for many a day, a talk and sound of an alteration and amendment; but nothing was fulfilled in the matter till the month of March in this year, when the Lord Eaglesham was coming from London to see the new lands that he had bought in our parish. His lordship was a man of a genteel spirit, and very fond of his horses, which were the most beautiful creatures of their kind that had been seen in all the country side. Coming, as I was noting, to see his new lands, he was obliged to pass through the clachan one day, when all the middens were gathered out, reeking and sappy, in the middle of the causey. Just as his lordship was driving in with his prancing steeds, like a Jehu, at the one end of the Vennel, a long string of loaded coal-carts came in at the other, and there was hardly room for my lord to pass them. What was to be done? His lordship could not turn back, and the coal-carts were in no less perplexity. Every body was out of doors to see

and to help; when, in trying to get his lordship's carriage over the top of a midden, the horses gave a sudden loup, and couped the coach, and threw my lord, head foremost, into the very scent-bottle of the whole commodity, which made him go perfect mad, and he swore like a trooper that he would get an act of parliament to put down the nuisance—the which now ripened in the course of this year into the undertaking of the trust-road.

His lordship, being in a woeful plight, left the carriage and came to the manse, till his servant went to the castle for a change for him; but he could not wait nor abide himself: so he got the lend of my best suit of clothes, and was wonderful jocose both with Mrs Balwhidder and me, for he was a portly man, and I but a thin body, and it was really a droll curiosity to see his lordship clad in my garments.

Out of this accident grew a sort of a neighbourliness between that Lord Eaglesham and me; so that when Andrew Lanshaw, the brother that was of the first Mrs Balwhidder, came to think of going to India, I wrote to my lord for his behoof, and his lordship got him sent out as a cadet, and was extraordinary discreet to Andrew when he went up to London to take his passage, speaking to him of me as if I had been a very saint, which the Searcher of Hearts knows I am far from thinking myself.

But to return to the making of the trust-road, which, as I have said, turned the town inside out. It was agreed among the heritors, that it should run along the back side of the south houses; and that there should be steadings feued off on each side, according to a plan that was laid down; and this being gone into, the town gradually, in the course of years, grew up into that orderliness which makes it now a pattern to the country side—all which was mainly owing to the accident that befell the Lord Eaglesham, which is a clear proof how improvements come about, as it were, by the immediate instigation of Providence, which should make the heart of man humble, and change his eyes of pride and haughtiness into a lowly demeanour.

But although this making of the trust-road was surely a great thing for the parish, and of an advantage to my people, we met, in this year, with a loss not to be compensated—that was the death of Nanse Banks, the schoolmistress. She had been long

in a weak and frail state; but being a methodical creature, still kept on the school, laying the foundation for many a worthy wife and mother. However, about the decline of the year her complaints increased, and she sent for me to consult about her giving up the school; and I went to see her on a Saturday afternoon, when the bit lassies, her scholars, had put the house in order, and gone home till the Monday.

She was sitting in the window-nook, reading *THE WORD* to herself, when I entered; but she closed the book, and put her spectacles in for a mark when she saw me; and, as it was expected I would come, her easy-chair, with a clean cover, had been set out for me by the scholars, by which I discerned that there was something more than common to happen, and so it appeared when I had taken my seat.

“Sir,” said she, “I hae sent for you on a thing troubles me sairly. I have warsled with poortith in this shed, which it has pleased the Lord to allow me to possess; but my strength is worn out, and I fear I maun yield in the strife;” and she wiped her eye with her apron. I told her, however, to be of good cheer; and then she said, “That she could no longer thole the din of the school, and that she was weary, and ready to lay herself down to die whenever the Lord was pleased to permit. But,” continued she, “what can I do without the school; and, alafs! I can neither work nor want; and I am wae to go on the session, for I am come of a decent family.” I comforted her, and told her, that I thought she had done so much good in the parish, that the session was deep in her debt, and that what they might give her was but a just payment for her service. “I would rather, however, sir,” said she, “try first what some of my auld scholars will do, and it was for that I wanted to speak with you. If some of them would but just, from time to time, look in upon me, that I may not die alane; and the little pick and drap that I require would not be hard upon them—I am more sure that in this way their gratitude would be no discredit, than I am of having any claim on the session.”

As I had always a great respect for an honest pride, I assured her that I would do what she wanted; and accordingly, the very morning after, being Sabbath, I preached a sermon on the

helplessness of them that have no help of man, meaning aged single women, living in garret-rooms, whose forlorn state, in the gloaming of life, I made manifest to the hearts and understandings of the congregation, in such a manner that many shed tears, and went away sorrowful.

Having thus roused the feelings of my people, I went round the houses on the Monday morning, and mentioned what I had to say more particularly about poor old Nanse Banks, the schoolmistress, and truly I was rejoiced at the condition of the hearts of my people. There was a universal sympathy among them; and it was soon ordered that, what with one and another, her decay should be provided for. But it was not ordained that she should be long heavy on their good-will. On the Monday the school was given up, and there was nothing but wailing among the bit lassies, the scholars, for getting the vacance, as the poor things said, because the mistress was going to lie down to dee. And, indeed, so it came to pass; for she took to her bed the same afternoon, and, in the course of the week, dwindled away, and slippit out of this howling wilderness into the kingdom of heaven, on the Sabbath following, as quietly as a blessed saint could do. And here I should mention, that the Lady Macadam, when I told her of Nanse Banks's case, enquired if she was a snuffer, and, being answered by me that she was, her ladyship sent her a pretty French enamel box full of macabaw, a fine snuff that she had in a bottle; and, among the macabaw, was found a guinea, at the bottom of the box, after Nanse Banks had departed this life, which was a kind thing of Lady Macadam to do.

About the close of this year there was a great sough of old prophecies, fortelling mutations and adversities, chiefly on account of the canal that was spoken of to join the rivers of the Clyde and the Forth, it being thought an impossible thing to be done; and the Adam and Eve pear-tree, in our garden, budded out in an awful manner, and had divers flourishes on it at Yule, which was thought an ominous thing, especially as the second Mrs Balwhidder was at the downlying with my eldest son Gilbert, that is, the merchant in Glasgow; but nothing came o't, and the howdie said she had an easy time when the child came into the

world, which was on the very last day of the year, to the great satisfaction of me, and of my people, who were wonderful lifted up because their minister had a man-child born unto him

CHAPTER IX.—YEAR 1768.

LORD EAGLESHAM USES HIS INTEREST IN FAVOUR OF CHARLES MALCOLM—THE FINDING OF A NEW SCHOOLMISTRESS—MISS SABBINA HOOKY GETS THE PLACE—CHANGE OF FASHIONS IN THE PARISH.

It's a surprising thing how time flieth away, carrying off our youth and strength, and leaving us nothing but wrinkles and the ails of old age. Gilbert, my son, that is now a corpulent man, and a Glasgow merchant, when I take up my pen to record the memorables of this Ann. Dom., seems to me yet but a suckling in swaddling clothes, mewling and peevish in the arms of his mother, that has been long laid in the cold kirkyard, beside her predecessor, in Abraham's bosom. It is not, however, my design to speak much anent my own affairs, which would be a very improper and uncomely thing, but only of what happened in the parish, this book being for a witness and testimony of my ministry. Therefore, setting out of view both me and mine, I will now resuscitate the concerns of Mrs Malcolm and her children; for, as I think, never was there such a visible preordination seen in the lives of any persons, as was seen in that of this worthy decent woman, and her well-doing offspring. Her morning was raw, and a sore blight fell upon her fortunes; but the sun looked out on her mid-day, and her evening closed loun and warm; and the stars of the firmament, that are the eyes of heaven, beamed as it were with gladness, when she lay down to sleep the sleep of rest.

Her son Charles was by this time grown up into a stout buirdly lad, and it was expected that, before the return of the Tobacco trader, he would have been out of his time, and a man afore the mast, which was a great step of preferment, as I heard say by persons skilled in seafaring concerns. But this was not

ordered to happen ; for, when the Tobacco trader was lying in the harbour of Virginia in the North Americas, a pressgang, that was in need of men for a man-of-war, came on board, and pressed poor Charles, and sailed away with him on a cruise, nobody, for many a day, could tell where, till I thought of the Lord Eaglesham's kindness. His lordship having something to say with the king's government, I wrote to him, telling him who I was, and how jocose he had been when buttoned in my clothes, that he might recollect me, thanking him, at the same time, for his condescension and patronage to Andrew Lanshaw, in his way to the East Indies. I then slipped in, at the end of the letter, a bit nota-bene concerning the case of Charles Malcolm, begging his lordship, on account of the poor lad's widow mother, to enquire at the government if they could tell us any thing about Charles. In the due course of time, I got a most civil reply from his lordship, stating all about the name of the man-of-war, and where she was ; and at the conclusion his lordship said, that I was lucky in having the brother of a Lord of the Admiralty on this occasion for my agent, as otherwise, from the vagueness of my statement, the information might not have been procured ; which remark of his lordship was long a great riddle to me ; for I could not think what he meant about an agent, till, in the course of the year, we heard that his own brother was concerned in the Admiralty ; so that all his lordship meant was only to crack a joke with me, and that he was ever ready and free to do, as shall be related in the sequel, for he was an excellent man.

There being a vacancy for a schoolmistress, it was proposed to Mrs Malcolm, that, under her superintendence, her daughter Kate, that had been learning great artifices in needle-work so long with Lady Macadam, should take up the school, and the session undertook to make good to Kate the sum of five pounds sterling per annum, over and above what the scholars were to pay. But Mrs Malcolm said she had not strength herself to warsle with so many unruly brats, and that Kate, though a fine lassie, was a tempestuous spirit, and might lame some of the bairns in her passion ; and that selfsame night, Lady Macadam wrote me a very complaining letter, for trying to wile away her

companion; but her ladyship was a canary-headed woman, and given to flights and tantrums, having in her youth been a great toast among the quality. It would, however, have saved her from a sore heart, had she never thought of keeping Kate Malcolm. For this year her only son, who was learning the art of war at an academy in France, came to pay her, his lady mother, a visit. He was a brisk and light-hearted stripling, and Kate Malcolm was budding into a very rose of beauty; so between them a hankering began, which, for a season, was productive of great heaviness of heart to the poor old cripple lady; indeed, she assured me herself, that all her rheumatics were nothing to the heart-ache which she suffered in the progress of this business. But that will be more treated of hereafter; suffice it to say for the present, that we have thus recorded how the plan for making Kate Malcolm our schoolmistress came to nought. It pleased, however, Him, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, to send at this time among us a Miss Sabrina Hooky, the daughter of old Mr Hooky, who had been schoolmaster in a neighbouring parish. She had gone, after his death, to live with an auntie in Glasgow, that kept a shop in the Gallowgate. It was thought that the old woman would have left her heir to all her gatherings, and so she said she would, but alas! our life is but within our lip. Before her testament was made, she was carried suddenly off by an apoplectick, an awful monument of the uncertainty of time and the nearness of eternity, in her own shop, as she was in the very act of weighing out an ounce of snuff to a professor of the College, as Miss Sabrina herself told me. Being thus destitute, it happened that Miss Sabrina heard of the vacancy in our parish, as it were, just by the cry of a passing bird, for she could not tell how; although I judge myself that William Keckle the elder had a hand in it, as he was at the time in Glasgow; and she wrote me a wonderful well-penned letter, bespeaking the situation, which letter came to hand on the morn following Lady Macadam's stramash to me about Kate Malcolm, and I laid it before the session the same day; so that, by the time her auntie's concern was taken off her hands, she had a home and a howf among us to come to, in the which she lived upwards of thirty years in credit and respect, although

some thought she had not the art of her predecessor, and was more uppish in her carriage than befitted the decorum of her vocation. Hers, however, was but a harmless vanity; and, poor woman, she needed all manner of graces to set her out; for she was made up of odds and ends, and had but one good eye, the other being blind, and just like a blue bead. At first she plainly set her cap for Mr Lorimore, but after oggling and goggling at him every Sunday in the kirk for a whole half-year and more, Miss Sabrina desisted in despair.

But the most remarkable thing about her coming into the parish, was the change that took place in Christian names among us. Old Mr Hooky, her father, had, from the time he read his Virgil, maintained a sort of intromission with the nine muses, by which he was led to baptize her Sabrina, after a name mentioned by John Milton in one of his works. Miss Sabrina began by calling our Jennies Jessies, and our Nannies Nancies; alas! I have lived to see even these likewise grow old-fashioned. She had also a taste in the mantua-making line, which she had learnt in Glasgow; and I could date from the very Sabbath of her first appearance in the kirk, a change growing in the garb of the younger lassies, who from that day began to lay aside the silken plaidie over the head, the which had been the pride and bravery of their grandmothers; and instead of the snood, that was so snod and simple, they hided their heads in round-eared bees-cap mutches, made of gauze and catgut, and other curious contrivances of French millendery; all which brought a deal of custom to Miss Sabrina, over and above the incomings and Candlemas offerings of the school; insomuch that she saved money, and in the course of three years had ten pounds to put in the bank.

At the time, these alterations and revolutions in the parish were thought a great advantage; but now when I look back upon them, as a traveller on the hill over the road he has passed, I have my doubts. For with wealth come wants, like a troop of clamorous beggars at the heels of a generous man; and it's hard to tell wherein the benefit of improvement in a country parish consists, especially to those who live by the sweat of their brow. But it is not for me to make reflections; my task and duty is to note the changes of time and habitudes.

CHAPTER X.—YEAR 1769.

A TOAD FOUND IN THE HEART OF A STONE—ROBERT MALCOLM, WHO HAD BEEN AT SEA, RETURNS FROM A NORTHERN VOYAGE—KATE MALCOLM'S CLAUDESTINE CORRESPONDENCE WITH LADY MACADAM'S SON.

I HAVE my doubts whether it was in the beginning of this year, or in the end of the last, that a very extraordinary thing came to light in the parish ; but, howsoever that may be, there is nothing more certain than the fact, which it is my duty to record. I have mentioned already how it was that the toll, or trust-road, was set a-going, on account of the Lord Eaglesham's tumbling on the midden in the Vennel. Well, it happened to one of the labouring men, in breaking the stones to make metal for the new road, that he broke a stone that was both large and remarkable, and in the heart of it, which was boss, there was found a living creature, that jumped out the moment it saw the light of heaven, to the great terrification of the man, who could think it was nothing but an evil spirit that had been imprisoned therein for a time. The man came to me like a demented creature, and the whole clachan gathered out, young and old, and I went at their head to see what the miracle could be, for the man said it was a fiery dragon, spewing smoke and flames. But when we came to the spot, it was just a yird toad, and the laddie weans nevelled it to death with stones, before I could persuade them to give over. Since then, I have read of such things coming to light in the Scots Magazine, a very valuable book.

Soon after the affair of " the wee deil in the stane," as it was called, a sough reached us that the Americas were seized with the rebellious spirit of the ten tribes, and were snapping their fingers in the face of the king's government. The news came on a Saturday night, for we had no newspapers in those days, and was brought by Robin Modiwort, that fetched the letters from the Irville post. Thomas Fullarton (he has been dead many a day) kept the grocery shop in Irville, and he had been in at Glasgow, as was his yearly custom, to settle his accounts, and to buy a hogshead of tobacco, with sugar and other spiceries ;

and being in Glasgow, Thomas was told by the merchant of a great rise in tobacco, that had happened by reason of the contumacity of the plantations, and it was thought that blood would be spilt before things were ended, for that the King and Parliament were in a great passion with them. But as Charles Malcolm, in the king's ship, was the only one belonging to the parish that was likely to be art and part in the business, we were in a manner little troubled at the time with this first gasp of the monster of war, who, for our sins, was ordained to swallow up and devour so many of our fellow-subjects, before he was bound again in the chains of mercy and peace.

I had, in the mean time, written a letter to the Lord Eaglesham, to get Charles Malcolm out of the clutches of the pressgang in the man-of-war; and about a month after, his lordship sent me an answer, wherein was enclosed a letter from the captain of the ship, saying, that Charles Malcolm was so good a man that he was reluctant to part with him, and that Charles himself was well contented to remain aboard. Anent which, his lordship said to me, that he had written back to the captain to make a midshipman of Charles, and that he would take him under his own protection, which was great joy on two accounts to us all, especially to his mother; first, to hear that Charles was a good man, although in years still but a youth; and, secondly, that my lord had, of his own free-will, taken him under the wing of his patronage.

But the sweet of this world is never to be enjoyed without some of the sour. The coal bark between Irville and Belfast, in which Robert Malcolm, the second son of his mother, was serving his time to be a sailor, got a charter, as it was called, to go with to Norway for deals, which grieved Mrs Malcolm to the very heart; for there was then no short cut by the canal, as now is, between the rivers of the Forth and Clyde, but every ship was obligated to go far away round by the Orkneys, which, although a voyage in the summer not overly dangerous, there being long days and short nights then, yet in the winter it was far otherwise, many vessels being frozen up in the Baltic till the spring; and there was a story told at the time, of an Irville bark coming home in the dead of the year, that lost her way

altogether, and was supposed to have sailed north into utter darkness, for she was never more heard of: and many an awful thing was said of what the auld mariners about the shore thought concerning the crew of that misfortunate vessel. However, Mrs Malcolm was a woman of great faith, and having placed her reliance on Him who is the orphan's stay and widow's trust, she resigned her bairn into his hands, with a religious submission to his pleasure, though the mother's tear of weak human nature was on her cheek and in her e'e. And her faith was well rewarded, for the vessel brought him safe home, and he had seen such a world of things, that it was just to read a story-book to hear him tell of Elsinour and Gottenburg, and other fine and great places that we had never heard of till that time; and he brought me a bottle of Riga balsam, which for healing cuts was just miraculous, besides a clear bottle of Rososolus for his mother, a spirit which for cordiality could not be told; for though since that time we have had many a sort of Dantzic cordial, I have never tasted any to compare with Robin Malcolm's Rososolus. The Lady Macadam, who had a knowledge of such things, declared it was the best of the best sort; for Mrs Malcolm sent her ladyship some of it in a doctor's bottle, as well as to Mrs Balwhidder, who was then at the downlying with our daughter Janet—a woman now in the married state, that makes a most excellent wife, having been brought up with great pains, and well educated, as I shall have to record by-and-by.

About the Christmas of this year, Lady Macadam's son having been perfected in the art of war at a school in France, had, with the help of his mother's friends, and his father's fame, got a stand of colours in the Royal Scots regiment; he came to show himself in his regimentals to his lady mother, like a dutiful son, as he certainly was. It happened that he was in the kirk in his scarlets and gold, on the same Sunday that Robert Malcolm came home from the long voyage to Norway for deals; and I thought when I saw the soldier and the sailor from the pulpit, that it was an omen of war, among our harmless country folks, like swords and cannon amidst ploughs and sickles, coming upon us; and I became laden in spirit, and had

a most weighty prayer upon the occasion, which was long after remembered, many thinking, when the American war broke out, that I had been gifted with a glimmering of prophecy on that day.

It was during this visit to his lady mother, that young Laird Macadam settled the correspondence with Kate Malcolm, which, in the process of time, caused us all so much trouble; for it was a clandestine concern: but the time is not yet ripe for me to speak of it more at large. I should, however, mention, before concluding this annal, that Mrs Malcolm herself was this winter brought to death's door by a terrible host that came on her in the kirk, by taking a kittling in her throat. It was a terrification to hear her sometimes; but she got the better of it in the spring, and was more herself thereafter than she had been for years before; and her daughter Effie, or Euphemia, as she was called by Miss Sabrina, the schoolmistress, was growing up to be a gleg and clever quean; she was, indeed, such a spirit in her way, that the folks called her Spunkie; while her son William, that was the youngest of the five, was making a wonderful proficiency with Mr Lorimore. He was indeed a douce, well-doing laddie, of a composed nature; insomuch that the master said he was surely chosen for the ministry. In short, the more I think on what befell this family, and of the great meekness and Christian worth of the parent, I verily believe there never could have been in any parish such a manifestation of the truth, that they who put their trust in the Lord, are sure of having a friend that will never forsake them

CHAPTER XI.—YEAR 1770.

THIS YEAR A HAPPY AND TRANQUIL ONE—LORD EAGLESHAM ESTABLISHES A FAIR IN THE VILLAGE—THE SHOW OF PUNCH APPEARS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE PARISH.

THIS blessed Ann. Dom. was one of the Sabbaths of my ministry. When I look back upon it, all is quiet and good order ;

the darkest cloud of the smuggling had passed over, at least from my people, and the rumours of rebellion in America were but like the distant sound of the bars of Ayr. We sat, as it were, in a low and pleasant place, beholding our prosperity, like the apple-tree adorned with her garlands of flourishes, in the first fair mornings of the spring, when the birds were returning thanks to their Maker for the coming again of the seed-time, and the busy bee goeth forth from her cell, to gather honey from the flowers of the field, and the broom of the hill, and the blue-bells and gowans, which Nature, with a gracious and a gentle hand, scatters in the valley, as she walketh forth in her beauty, to testify to the goodness of the Father of all mercies.

Both at the spring and the harvest sacraments, the weather was as that which is in Paradise; there was a glad composure in all hearts, and the minds of men were softened towards each other. The number of communicants was greater than had been known for many years, and the tables were filled by the pious from many a neighbouring parish: those of my hearers who had opposed my placing, declared openly, for a testimony of satisfaction and holy thankfulness, that the tent, so surrounded as it was on both occasions, was a sight they never had expected to see. I was, to be sure, assisted by some of the best divines then in the land, but I had not been a sluggard myself in the vineyard.

Often, when I think on this year, so fruitful in pleasant intimacies, has the thought come into my mind, that as the Lord blesses the earth from time to time with a harvest of more than the usual increase, so, in like manner, he is sometimes for a season pleased to pour into the breasts of mankind a larger portion of good-will and charity, disposing them to love one another, to be kindly to all creatures, and filled with the delight of thankfulness to himself, which is the greatest of blessings.

It was in this year that the Earl of Eaglesham ordered the fair to be established in the village; and it was a day of wonderful festivity to all the bairns, and lads and lassies, for miles round. I think, indeed, that there has never been such a fair as the first since; for although we have more mountebanks and merry-andrews now, and richer cargoes of groceries and packman's

stands, yet there has been a falling off in the light-hearted daffing, while the hobleshowes in the change-houses have been awfully augmented. It was on this occasion that Punch's opera was first seen in our country side, and surely never was there such a funny curiosity; for although Mr Punch himself was but a timber idol, he was as droll as a true living thing, and napped with his head so comical; but oh! he was a sorrowful contumacious captain, and it was just a sport to see how he rampaged, and triumphed, and sang. For months after, the laddie weans did nothing but squeak and sing like Punch. In short, a blithe spirit was among us throughout this year, and the briefness of the chronicle bears witness to the innocency of the time.

CHAPTER XII.—YEAR 1771.

THE NATURE OF LADY MACADAM'S AMUSEMENTS—SHE INTERCEPTS LETTERS FROM HER SON TO KATE MALCOLM.

It was in this year that my troubles with Lady Macadam's affair began. She was a woman, as I have by hint here and there intimated, of a prelatie disposition, seeking all things her own way, and not overly scrupulous about the means, which I take to be the true humour of prelacy. She was come of a high episcopal race in the east country, where sound doctrine had been long but little heard, and she considered the comely humility of a presbyter as the wickedness of hypocrisy; so that, saving in the way of neighbourly visitation, there was no sincere communion between us. Nevertheless, with all her vagaries, she had the element of a kindly spirit, that would sometimes kythe in actions of charity, that showed symptoms of a true Christian grace, had it been properly cultivated; but her morals had been greatly neglected in her youth, and she would waste her precious time in the long winter nights, playing at the cards with her visiters; in the which thriftless and sinful pastime, she was at great pains to instruct Kate Malcolm, which

I was grieved to understand. What, however, I most disliked in her ladyship, was a lightness and juvenility of behaviour altogether unbecoming her years; for she was far past threescore, having been long married without children. Her son, the soldier officer, came so late, that it was thought she would have been taken up as an evidence in the Douglas cause. She was, to be sure, crippled with the rheumatics, and no doubt the time hung heavy on her hands; but the best friends of recreation and sport must allow, that an old woman, sitting whole hours jingling with that paralytic chattel a spinnet, was not a natural object! What, then, could be said for her singing Italian songs, and getting all the newest from Vauxhall in London, a boxful at a time, with new novel-books, and trinkum-trankum flowers and feathers, and sweetmeats, sent to her by a lady of the blood royal of Paris? As for the music, she was at great pains to instruct Kate, which, with the other things she taught, were sufficient, as my lady said herself, to qualify poor Kate for a duchess or a governess, in either of which capacities, her ladyship assured Mrs Malcolm, she would do honour to her instructor, meaning her own self; but I must come to the point anent the affair.

One evening, early in the month of January, as I was sitting by myself in my closet studying the Scots Magazine, which I well remember the new number had come but that very night, Mrs Balwhidder being at the time busy with the lasses in the kitchen, and superintending, as her custom was, for she was a clever woman, a great wool-spinning we then had, both little wheel and meikle wheel, for stockings and blankets—sitting, as I was saying, in the study, with the fire well gathered up, for a night's reflection, a prodigious knocking came to the door, by which the book was almost startled out of my hand, and all the wheels in the house were silenced at once. This was her ladyship's flunkey, to beg me to go to her, whom he described as in a state of desperation. Christianity required that I should obey the summons; so, with what haste I could, thinking that perhaps, as she had been low-spirited for some time about the young laird's going to the Indies, she might have got a cast of grace, and been wakened in despair to the state of darkness in which

she had so long lived, I made as few steps of the road between the manse and her house as it was in my ability to do.

On reaching the door, I found a great light in the house—candles burning up stairs and down stairs, and a sough of something extraordinary going on. I went into the dining-room, where her ladyship was wont to sit; but she was not there—only Kate Malcolm all alone, busily picking bits of paper from the carpet. When she looked up, I saw that her eyes were red with weeping, and I was alarmed, and said, “Katy, my dear, I hope there is no danger?” Upon which the poor lassie rose, and, flinging herself in a chair, covered her face with her hands, and wept bitterly.

“What is the old fool doing with the wench?” cried a sharp angry voice from the drawing-room—“why does not he come to me?” It was the voice of Lady Macadam herself, and she meant me. So I went to her; but, oh! she was in a far different state from what I had hoped. The pride of this world had got the upper hand of her, and was playing dreadful antics with her understanding. There was she, painted like a Jezebel, with gum-flowers on her head, as was her custom every afternoon, sitting on a settee, for she was lame, and in her hand she held a letter. “Sir,” said she, as I came into the room, “I want you to go instantly to that young fellow, your clerk, (meaning Mr Lorimore, the schoolmaster, who was likewise session-clerk and precentor,) and tell him I will give him a couple of hundred pounds to marry Miss Malcolm without delay, and undertake to procure him a living from some of my friends.”

“Softly, my lady, you must first tell me the meaning of all this haste of kindness,” said I, in my calm methodical manner. At the which she began to cry and sob, like a petted bairn, and to bewail her ruin, and the dishonour of her family. I was surprised, and beginning to be confounded; at length out it came. The flunkey had that night brought two London letters from the Irville post, and Kate Malcolm being out of the way when he came home, he took them both in to her ladyship on the silver server, as was his custom; and her ladyship, not jealousying that Kate could have a correspondence with London, thought both the letters were for herself, for they were frank-

ed; so, as it happened, she opened the one that was for Kate, and this, too, from the young laird, her own son. She could not believe her eyes when she saw the first words in his hand of write; and she read, and she better read, till she read all the letter, by which she came to know that Kate and her darling were trysted, and that this was not the first love-letter which had passed between them. She, therefore, tore it in pieces, and sent for me, and screamed for Kate; in short, went, as it were, off at the head, and was neither to bind nor to hold on account of this intrigue, as she, in her wrath, stigmatized the innocent gallanting of poor Kate and the young laird.

I listened in patience to all she had to say anent the discovery, and offered her the very best advice; but she derided my judgment; and because I would not speak outright to Mr Lorimore, and get him to marry Kate off hand, she bade me good-night with an air, and sent for him herself. He, however, was on the brink of marriage with his present worthy helpmate, and declined her ladyship's proposals, which angered her still more. But although there was surely a great lack of discretion in all this, and her ladyship was entirely overcome with her passion, she would not part with Kate, nor allow her to quit the house with me, but made her sup with her as usual that night, calling her sometimes a perfidious baggage, and at other times, forgetting her delirium, speaking to her as kindly as ever. At night, Kate as usual helped her ladyship into her bed, (this she told me with tears in her eyes next morning;) and when Lady Macadam, as was her wont, bent to kiss her for good-night, she suddenly recollected "the intrigue," and gave Kate such a slap on the side of the head, as quite dislocated for a time the intellects of the poor young lassie. Next morning, Kate was solemnly advised never to write again to the laird, while the lady wrote him a letter, which, she said, would be as good as a birch to the breech of the boy. Nothing, therefore, for some time, indeed, throughout the year, came of this matter; but her ladyship, when Mrs Balwhidder soon after called on her, said that I was a nose-of-wax, and that she never would speak to me again, which surely was not a polite thing to say to Mrs Balwhidder, my second wife.

This stramash was the first time that I had interposed in the family concerns of my people; for it was against my nature to make or meddle with private actions, saving only such as in course of nature came before the session; but I was not satisfied with the principles of Lady Macadam, and I began to be weary about Kate Malcolm's situation with her ladyship, whose ways of thinking I saw were not to be depended on, especially in those things wherein her pride and vanity were concerned. But the time ran on—the butterflies and the blossoms were succeeded by the leaves and the fruit, and nothing of a particular nature farther molested the general tranquillity of this year; about the end of which, there came on a sudden frost, after a tack of wet weather. The roads were just a sheet of ice, like a frozen river; insomuch that the coal-carts could not work; and one of our cows, (Mrs Balwhidder said, after the accident, it was our best; but it was not so much thought of before,) fell in coming from the glebe to the byre, and broke its two hinder legs, which obligated us to kill it, in order to put the beast out of pain. As this happened after we had salted our mart, it occasioned us to have a double crop of puddings, and such a show of hams in the kitchen, as was a marvel to our visitors to see.

CHAPTER XIII.—YEAR 1772.

THE DETECTION OF MR HECKLETTEXT'S GUILT—HE THREATENS TO PROSECUTE THE
ELDERS FOR DEFAMATION—THE MUSCOVY DUCK GETS AN OPERATION PERFORMED
ON IT

ON New-Year's night, this year, a thing happened, which, in its own nature, was a trifle; but it turned out as a mustard-seed that grows into a great tree. One of the elders, who has long been dead and gone, came to the manse about a fact that was found out in the clachan, and after we had discoursed on it some time, he rose to take his departure. I went with him to the door with the candle in my hand—it was a clear frosty night, with a sharp wind; and the moment I opened the door,

the blast blew out the candle, so that I heedlessly, with the candlestick in my hand, walked with him to the yett without my hat, by which I took a sore cold in my head, that brought on a dreadful toothache; insomuch, that I was obligated to go into Irville to get the tooth drawn, and this caused my face to swell to such a fright; that, on the Sabbath-day, I could not preach to my people. There was, however, at that time, a young man, one Mr Heckletext, tutor in Sir Hugh Montgomerie's family, and who had shortly before been licensed. Finding that I would not be able to preach myself, I sent to him, and begged he would officiate for me, which he very pleasantly consented to do, being, like all the young clergy, thirsting to show his light to the world. 'Twixt the fore and afternoon's worship, he took his check of dinner at the manse, and I could not but say that he seemed both discreet and sincere. Judge, however, what was brewing, when the same night Mr Lorimore came and told me, that Mr Heckletext was the suspected person anent the fact that had been instrumental, in the hand of a chastising Providence, to afflict me with the toothache, in order, as it afterwards came to pass, to bring the hidden hypocrisy of the ungodly preacher to light. It seems that the donsie lassie who was in fault, had gone to the kirk in the afternoon, and seeing who was in the pulpit, where she expected to see me, was seized with the hysterics, and taken with her crying on the spot, the which being untimely, proved the death of both mother and bairn, before the thing was properly laid to the father's charge.

This caused a great uproar in the parish. I was sorely blamed to let such a man as Mr Heckletext go up into my pulpit, although I was as ignorant of his offences as the innocent child that perished; and, in an unguarded hour, to pacify some of the elders, who were just distracted about the disgrace, I consented to have him called before the session. He obeyed the call, and in a manner that I will never forget; for he was a sorrow of sin and audacity, and demanded to know why, and for what reason, he was summoned. I told him the whole affair in my calm and moderate way; but it was oil cast upon a burning coal. He flamed up in a terrible passion: threepit at the elders that they had no proof whatever of his having had any trafficking in the

business, which was the case ; for it was only a notion, the poor deceased lassie never having made a disclosure : called them libellous conspirators against his character, which was his only fortune, and concluded by threatening to punish them, though he exempted me from the injury which their slanderous insinuations had done to his prospects in life. We were all terrified, and allowed him to go away without uttering a word ; and sure enough he did bring a plea in the courts of Edinburgh against Mr Lorimore and the elders for damages, laid at a great sum.

What might have been the consequence, no one can tell ; but soon after he married Sir Hugh's housekeeper, and went with her into Edinburgh, where he took up a school ; and, before the trial came on, that is to say, within three months of the day that I myself married them, Mrs Heckletext was delivered of a thriving lad bairn, which would have been a witness for the elders, had the worst come to the worst. This was, indeed, we all thought, a joyous deliverance to the parish, and it was a lesson to me never to allow any preacher to mount my pulpit, unless I knew something of his moral character.

In other respects, this year passed very peaceably in the parish : there was a visible increase of worldly circumstances, and the hedges which had been planted along the toll-road, began to put forth their branches, and to give new notions of orderliness and beauty to the farmers. Mrs Malcolm heard from time to time from her son Charles, on board the man-of-war the Avenger, where he was midshipman ; and he had found a friend in the captain, that was just a father to him. Her second son, Robert, being out of his time at Irville, went to the Clyde to look for a berth, and was hired to go to Jamaica, in a ship called the Trooper. He was a lad of greater sobriety of nature than Charles ; douce, honest, and faithful ; and when he came home, though he brought no limes to me to make punch, like his brother, he brought a Muscovy duck to Lady Macadam, who had, as I have related, in a manner educated his sister Kate. That duck was the first of the kind we had ever seen, and many thought it was of the goose species, only with short bowly legs. It was, however, a tractable and homely beast ; and after some confabulation, as my lady herself told Mrs Balwhidder, it

was received into fellowship by her other ducks and poultry. It is not, however, so much on account of the rarity of the creature, that I have introduced it here, as for the purpose of relating a wonderful operation that was performed on it by Miss Sabrina, the schoolmistress.

There happened to be a sack of beans in our stable, and Lady Macadam's hens and fowls, which were not overly fed at home through the inattention of her servants, being great stravaigers for their meat, in passing the door went in to pick, and the Muscovy, seeing a hole in the bean-sack, dabbled out a crapful before she was disturbed. The beans swelled on the poor bird's stomach, and her crap bellied out like the kyte of a Glasgow magistrate, until it was just a sight to be seen with its head back on its shoulders. The bairns of the clachan followed it up and down, crying, the lady's muckle jock's aye growing bigger, till every heart was wae for the creature. Some thought it was afflicted with a tympany, and others, that it was the natural way for suchlike ducks to cleck their young. In short, we were all concerned; and my lady, having a great opinion of Miss Sabrina's skill, had a consultation with her on the case, at which Miss Sabrina advised, that what she called the Cæsarean operation should be tried, which she herself performed accordingly, by opening the creature's crap, and taking out as many beans as filled a mutchkin stoup, after which she sewed it up, and the Muscovy went its way to the water-side, and began to swim, and was as jocund as ever; insomuch, that in three days after it was quite cured of all the consequences of its surfeit.

I had at one time a notion to send an account of this to the Scots Magazine, but something always came in the way to prevent me; so that it has been reserved for a place in this chronicle, being, after Mr Heckletext's affair, the most memorable thing in our history of this year.

CHAPTER XIV.—YEAR 1773.

THE NEW SCHOOL-HOUSE—LORD EAGLESHAM COMES DOWN TO THE CASTLE—
I REFUSE TO GO AND DINE THERE ON SUNDAY, BUT GO ON MONDAY, AND MEET
WITH AN ENGLISH DEAN.

IN this Ann. Dom. there was something like a plea getting to a head, between the session and some of the heritors, about a new school-house; the thatch having been torn from the rigging of the old one by a blast of wind, on the first Monday of February, by which a great snow storm got admission, and the school was rendered utterly uninhabitable. The smaller sort of lairds were very willing to come into the plan with an extra contribution, because they respected the master, and their bairns were at the school; but the gentlemen, who had tutors in their own houses, were not so manageable; and some of them even went so far as to say, that the kirk, being only wanted on Sunday, would do very well for a school all the rest of the week, which was a very profane way of speaking; and I was resolved to set myself against any such thing, and to labour, according to the power and efficacy of my station, to get a new school built.

Many a meeting the session had on the subject; and the heritors debated, and discussed, and revised their proceedings, and still no money for the needful work was forthcoming. Whereupon it happened one morning, as I was rummaging in my scrutoire, that I laid my hand on the Lord Eaglesham's letter anent Charles Malcolm; and it was put into my head at that moment, that if I was to write to his lordship, who was the greatest heritor, and owned now the major part of the parish, that by his help and influence I might be an instrument to the building of a comfortable new school. Accordingly, I sat down and wrote my lord all about the accident, and the state of the school-house, and the divisions and seditions among the heritors, and sent the letter to him at London by the post the same day, without saying a word to any living soul on the subject.

This in me was an advised thought; for, by the return of

post, his lordship with his own hand, in a most kind manner, authorized me to say that he would build a new school at his own cost, and bade me go over and consult about it with his steward at the castle, to whom he had written by the same post the necessary instructions. Nothing could exceed the gladness which the news gave to the whole parish, and none said more in behalf of his lordship's bounty and liberality than the heritors; especially those gentry who grudged the undertaking, when it was thought that it would have to come out of their own pock-nook.

In the course of the summer, just as the roof was closing in of the school-house, my lord came to the castle with a great company, and was not there a day till he sent for me to come over, on the next Sunday, to dine with him; but I sent him word that I could not do so, for it would be a transgression of the Sabbath, which made him send his own gentleman, to make his apology for having taken so great a liberty with me, and to beg me to come on the Monday, which I accordingly did, and nothing could be better than the discretion with which I was used. There was a vast company of English ladies and gentlemen, and his lordship, in a most jocose manner, told them all how he had fallen on the midden, and how I had clad him in my clothes, and there was a wonder of laughing and diversion; but the most particular thing in the company, was a large, round-faced man, with a wig, that was a dignitary in some great Episcopalian church in London, who was extraordinary condescending towards me, drinking wine with me at the table, and saying weighty sentences, in a fine style of language, about the becoming grace of simplicity and innocence of heart, in the clergy of all denominations of Christians, which I was pleased to hear; for really he had a proud red countenance, and I could not have thought he was so mortified to humility within, had I not heard with what sincerity he delivered himself, and seen how much reverence and attention was paid to him by all present, particularly by my lord's chaplain, who was a pious and pleasant young divine, though educated at Oxford for the Episcopalian persuasion.

One day, soon after, as I was sitting in my closet conning a

sermon for the next Sunday, I was surprised by a visit from the dean, as the dignitary was called. He had come, he said, to wait on me as rector of the parish—for so, it seems, they call a pastor in England—and to say, that, if it was agreeable, he would take a family dinner with us before he left the castle. I could make no objection to this kindness; but said I hoped my lord would come with him, and that we would do our best to entertain them with all suitable hospitality. About an hour or so after he had returned to the castle, one of the flunkys brought a letter from his lordship, to say, that not only he would come with the dean, but that they would bring his other guests with them; and that, as they could only drink London wine, the butler would send me a hamper in the morning, assured, as he was pleased to say, that Mrs Balwhidder would otherwise provide good cheer.

This notification, however, was a great trouble to my wife, who was only used to manufacture the produce of our glebe and yard to a profitable purpose, and not used to the treatment of deans and lords, and other persons of quality. However, she was determined to stretch a point on this occasion; and we had, as all present declared, a charming dinner; for fortunately one of the sows had a litter of pigs a few days before, and in addition to a goose, that is but a boss bird, we had a roasted pig with an apple in its mouth, which was just a curiosity to see; and my lord called it a tithe pig; but I told him it was one of Mrs Balwhidder's own clecking, which saying of mine made no little sport when expounded to the dean.

But, och how! this was the last happy summer that we had for many a year in the parish; and an omen of the dule that ensued, was in a sacrilegious theft that a daft woman, Jenny Gaffaw, and her idiot daughter, did in the kirk, by tearing off and stealing the green serge lining of my lord's pew, to make, as they said, a hap for their shoulders in the cold weather—saving, however, the sin, we paid no attention at the time to the mischief and tribulation that so unheard-of a trespass boded to us all. It took place about Yule, when the weather was cold and frosty, and poor Jenny was not very able to go about seeking her meat as usual. The deed, however, was mainly done by her

daughter, who, when brought before me, said, “her poor mother’s back had mair need of claes than the kirk-boards;” which was so true a thing, that I could not punish her, but wrote anent it to my lord, who not only overlooked the offence, but sent orders to the servants at the castle to be kind to the peor woman, and the natural, her daughter.

CHAPTER XV.—YEAR 1774.

THE MURDER OF JEAN GLAIKIT—THE YOUNG LAIRD MACADAM COMES DOWN AND MARRIES KATE MALCOLM—THE CEREMONY PERFORMED BY ME, AND I AM COMMISSIONED TO BREAK THE MATTER TO LADY MACADAM—HER BEHAVIOUR.

WHEN I look back on this year, and compare what happened therein with the things that had gone before, I am grieved to the heart, and pressed down with an afflicted spirit. We had, as may be read, trials and tribulations in the days that were past; and in the rank and boisterous times of the smuggling there was much sin and blemish among us, but nothing so dark and awful as what fell out in the course of this unhappy year. The evil omen of daft Jenny Gaffaw and her daughter’s sacrilege, had soon a bloody verification.

About the beginning of the month of March in this year, the war in America was kindling so fast that the government was obligated to send soldiers over the sea, in the hope to quell the rebellious temper of the plantations; and a party of a regiment that was quartered at Ayr was ordered to march to Greenock, to be there shipped off. The men were wild and wicked profligates, without the fear of the Lord before their eyes; and some of them had drawn up with light women in Ayr, who followed them on their march. This the soldiers did not like, not wishing to be troubled with such gear in America; so the women, when they got the length of Kilmarnock, were ordered to retreat and go home, which they all did but one Jean Glaikit, who persisted in her intent to follow her joe, Patrick O’Neil, a Catholic Irish corporal. The man did, as he said, all in his capacity to persuade

her to return, but she was a contumacious limmer, and would not listen to reason ; so that, in passing along our toll-road, from less to more, the miserable wretches fell out, and fought, and the soldier put an end to her with a hasty knock on the head with his firelock, and marched on after his comrades.

The body of the woman was, about half an hour after, found by the scholars of Mr Lorimore's school, who had got the play to see the marching, and to hear the drums of the soldiers. Dreadful was the shout and the cry throughout the parish at this foul work. Some of the farmer lads followed the soldiers on horseback, and others ran to Sir Hugh, who was a justice of the peace, for his advice.—Such a day as that was !

However, the murderer was taken, and, with his arms tied behind him with a cord, he was brought back to the parish, where he confessed before Sir Hugh the deed, and how it happened. He was then put in a cart, and, being well guarded by six of the lads, was taken to Ayr jail.

It was not long after this that the murderer was brought to trial, and, being found guilty on his own confession, he was sentenced to be executed, and his body to be hung in chains near the spot where the deed was done. I thought that all in the parish would have run to desperation with horror when the news of this came, and I wrote immediately to the Lord Eaglesham to get this done away by the merciful power of the government, which he did, to our great solace and relief.

In the autumn, the young Laird Macadam, being ordered with his regiment for the Americas, got leave from the king to come and see his lady mother, before his departure. But it was not to see her only, as will presently appear.

Knowing how much her ladyship was averse to the notion he had of Kate Malcolm, he did not write of his coming, lest she would send Kate out of the way, but came in upon them at a late hour, as they were wasting their precious time, as was the nightly wont of my lady, with a pack of cards ; and so far was she from being pleased to see him, that no sooner did she behold his face, but, like a tap of tow, she kindled upon both him and Kate, and ordered them out of her sight and house. The young folk had discretion : Kate went home to her mother, and the

laird came to the manse, and begged us to take him in. He then told me what had happened; and that, having bought a captain's commission, he was resolved to marry Kate, and hoped I would perform the ceremony, if her mother would consent. "As for mine," said he, "she will never agree; but, when the thing is done, her pardon will not be difficult to get; for, with all her whims and caprice, she is generous and affectionate." In short, he so wiled and beguiled me, that I consented to marry them, if Mrs Malcolm was agreeable. "I will not disobey my mother," said he, "by asking her consent, which I know she will refuse; and, therefore, the sooner it is done the better." So we then stepped over to Mrs Malcolm's house, where we found that saintly woman, with Kate and Effie, and Willie, sitting peacefully at their fireside, preparing to read their Bibles for the night. When we went in, and when I saw Kate, that was so ladylike there, with the decent humility of her parent's dwelling, I could not but think she was destined for a better station; and when I looked at the captain, a handsome youth, I thought surely their marriage is made in heaven; and so I said to Mrs Malcolm, who after a time consented, and likewise agreed that her daughter should go with the captain to America; for her faith and trust in the goodness of Providence was great and boundless, striving, as it were, to be even with its tender mercies. Accordingly, the captain's man was sent to bid the chaise wait that had taken him to the lady's, and the marriage was sanctified by me before we left Mrs Malcolm's. No doubt, they ought to have been proclaimed three several Sabbaths; but I satisfied the session, at our first meeting, on account of the necessity of the case. The young couple went in the chaise travelling to Glasgow, authorizing me to break the matter to Lady Macadam, which was a sore task; but I was spared from the performance. For her ladyship had come to herself, and thinking on her own rashness in sending away Kate and the captain in the way she had done, she was like one by herself. All the servants were scattered out and abroad in quest of the lovers; and some of them, seeing the chaise drive from Mrs Malcolm's door with them in it, and me coming out, jealous of what had been done, and told their mistress outright of the mar-

riage, which was to her like a clap of thunder ; insomuch that she flung herself back in her settee, and was beating and drumming with her heels on the floor, like a madwoman in Bedlam, when I entered the room. For some time she took no notice of me, but continued her din ; but, by-and-by, she began to turn her eyes in fiery glances upon me, till I was terrified lest she would fly at me with her claws in her fury. At last she stopped all at once, and in a calm voice, said, " But it cannot now be helped, where are the vagabonds ?"—" They are gone," replied I.—" Gone ?" cried she, " gone where ?"—" To America, I suppose," was my answer ; upon which she again threw herself back in the settee, and began again to drum and beat with her feet as before. But not to dwell on small particularities, let it suffice to say, that she sent her coachman on one of her coach horses, which, being old and stiff, did not overtake the fugitives till they were in their bed at Kilmarnock, where they stopped that night ; but when they came back to the lady's in the morning, she was as cagey and meikle taken up with them, as if they had gotten her full consent and privilege to marry from the first. Thus was the first of Mrs Malcolm's children well and creditably settled. I have only now to conclude with observing, that my son Gilbert was seized with the smallpox about the beginning of December, and was blinded by them for seventeen days ; for the inoculation was not in practice yet among us, saving only in the genteel families that went into Edinburgh for the education of their children, where it was performed by the faculty there.

CHAPTER XVI.—YEAR 1775.

CAPTAIN MACADAM PROVIDES A HOUSE AND AN ANNUITY FOR OLD MRS MALCOLM—
MISS BETTY WUDRIFE BRINGS FROM EDINBURGH A NEW-FASHIONED SILK MANTLE,
BUT REFUSES TO GIVE THE PATTERN TO OLD LADY MACADAM—HER REVENGE.

THE regular course of nature is calm and orderly, and tempests and troubles are but lapses from the accustomed sobriety with which Providence works out the destined end of all things.

From Yule till Pace-Monday there had been a gradual subsidence of our personal and parochial tribulations, and the spring, though late, set in bright and beautiful, and was accompanied with the spirit of contentment; so that, excepting the great concern that we all began to take in the American rebellion, especially on account of Charles Malcolm that was in the man-of-war, and of Captain Macadam that had married Kate, we had throughout the better half of the year but little molestation of any sort. I should, however, note the upshot of the marriage.

By some cause that I do not recollect, if I ever had it properly told, the regiment wherein the captain had bought his commission was not sent to the plantations, but only over to Ireland, by which the captain and his lady were allowed to prolong their stay in the parish with his mother; and he, coming of age while he was among us, in making a settlement on his wife, bought the house at the Braehead, which was then just built by Thomas Shivers the mason, and he gave that house, with a judicious income, to Mrs Malcolm, telling her that it was not becoming, he having it in his power to do the contrary, that she should any longer be dependent on her own industry. For this the young man got a name like a sweet odour in all the country side; but that whimsical and prelatie lady his mother, just went out of all bounds, and played such pranks for an old woman, as cannot be told. To her daughter-in-law, however, she was wonderful kind; and, in fitting her out for going with the captain to Dublin, it was extraordinary to hear what a paraphernalia she provided her with. But who could have thought that in this kindness a sore trial was brewing for me!

It happened that Miss Betty Wudrife, the daughter of an heritor, had been on a visit to some of her friends in Edinburgh; and being in at Edinburgh, she came out with a fine mantle, decked and adorned with many a ribbon-knot, such as had never been seen in the parish. The Lady Macadam, hearing of this grand mantle, sent to beg Miss Betty to lend it to her, to make a copy for young Mrs Macadam. But Miss Betty was so vogie with her gay mantle, that she sent back word, it would be making it o'er common; which so nettled the old courtly lady, that she vowed revenge, and said the mantle

would not be long seen on Miss Betty. Nobody knew the meaning of her words; but she sent privately for Miss Sabrina, the schoolmistress, who was aye proud of being invited to my lady's, where she went on the Sabbath night to drink tea, and read Thomson's Seasons and Hervey's Meditations for her ladyship's recreation. Between the two, a secret plot was laid against Miss Betty and her Edinburgh mantle; and Miss Sabrina, in a very treacherous manner, for the which I afterwards chided her severely, went to Miss Betty, and got a sight of the mantle, and how it was made, and all about it, until she was in a capacity to make another like it; by which my lady and her, from old silk and satin negligées which her ladyship had worn at the French court, made up two mantles of the selfsame fashion as Miss Betty's, and, if possible, more sumptuously garnished, but in a flagrant fool way. On the Sunday morning after, her ladyship sent for Jenny Gaffaw, and her daft daughter Meg, and showed them the mantles, and said she would give them half-a-crown if they would go with them to the kirk, and take their place in the bench beside the elders, and, after worship, walk home before Miss Betty Wudrife. The two poor natural things were just transported with the sight of such bravery, and needed no other bribe; so, over their bits of ragged duds, they put on the pageantry, and walked away to the kirk like peacocks, and took their place on the bench, to the great diversion of the whole congregation.

I had no suspicion of this, and had prepared an affecting discourse about the horrors of war, in which I touched, with a tender hand, on the troubles that threatened families and kindred in America; but all the time I was preaching, doing my best, and expatiating till the tears came into my eyes, I could not divine what was the cause of the inattention of my people. But the two vain haverels were on the bench under me, and I could not see them; where they sat, spreading their feathers and picking their wings, stroking down and setting right their finery, with such an air as no living soul could see and withstand; while every eye in the kirk was now on them, and now at Miss Betty Wudrife, who was in a worse situation than if she had been on the stool of repentance.

Greatly grieved with the little heed that was paid to my discourse, I left the pulpit with a heavy heart; but when I came out into the kirkyard, and saw the two anties linking like ladies, and aye keeping in the way before Miss Betty, and looking back and around in their pride and admiration, with high heads and a wonderful pomp, I was really overcome, and could not keep my gravity, but laughed loud out among the graves, and in the face of all my people; who, seeing how I was vanquished in that unguarded moment by my enemy, made a universal and most unreverent breach of all decorum, at which Miss Betty, who had been the cause of all, ran into the first open door, and almost fainted away with mortification.

This affair was regarded by the elders as a sinful trespass on the orderliness that was needful in the Lord's house; and they called on me at the manse that night, and said it would be a guilty connivance if I did not rebuke and admonish Lady Macadam of the evil of her way; for they had questioned daft Jenny, and had got at the bottom of the whole plot and mischief. But I, who knew her ladyship's light way, would fain have had the elders to overlook it, rather than expose myself to her tantrums; but they considered the thing as a great scandal, so I was obligated to conform to their wishes. I might, however, have as well stayed at home, for her ladyship was in one of her jocose humours when I went to speak to her on the subject; and it was so far from my power to make a proper impression on her of the enormity that had been committed, that she made me laugh, in spite of my reason, at the fantastical drollery of her malicious prank on Miss Betty Wudrife.

It, however, did not end here; for the session, knowing that it was profitless to speak to the daft mother and daughter, who had been the instruments, gave orders to Willy Howking, the betheral, not to let them again so far into the kirk; and Willy, having scarcely more sense than them both, thought proper to keep them out next Sunday altogether. The twa said nothing at the time, but the adversary was busy with them; for, on the Wednesday following, there being a meeting of the synod at Ayr, to my utter amazement the mother and daughter made their appearance there in all their finery, and raised a complaint

against me and the session, for debarring them from church privileges. No stage play could have produced such an effect. I was perfectly dumfounded; and every member of the synod might have been tied with a straw, they were so overcome with this new device of that endless woman, when bent on provocation—the Lady Macadam; in whom the saying was verified, that old folk are twice bairns; for in such plays, pranks, and projects, she was as playrife as a very lassie at her sampler; and this is but a swatch to what lengths she would go. The complaint was dismissed, by which the session and me were assoilzied; but I'll never forget till the day of my death what I suffered on that occasion, to be so put to the wall by two born idiots.

CHAPTER XVII.—YEAR 1776.

A RECRUITING PARTY COMES TO IRVILLE—THOMAS WILSON AND SOME OTHERS
ENLIST—CHARLES MALCOLM'S RETURN.

It belongs to the chroniclers of the realm to describe the damage and detriment which fell on the power and prosperity of the kingdom, by reason of the rebellion, that was fired into open war, against the name and authority of the king in the plantations of America; for my task is to describe what happened within the narrow bound of the pasturage of the Lord's flock, of which, in his bounty and mercy, he made me the humble, willing, but alas! the weak and ineffectual shepherd.

About the month of February, a recruiting party came to our neighbour town of Irville, to beat up for men to be soldiers against the rebels; and thus the battle was brought, as it were, to our gates; for the very first man that took on with them was one Thomas Wilson, a cottar in our clachan, who, up to that time, had been a decent and creditable character. He was at first a farmer lad, but had forgathered with a doited tawpy, whom he married, and had offspring three or four. For some time it was noticed that he had a down and thoughtful look,

that his cleeding was growing bare, and that his wife kept an untrig house, which, it was feared by many, was the cause of Thomas going o'er often to the change-house; he was, in short, during the greater part of the winter, evidently a man foregone in the pleasures of this world, which made all that knew him compassionate his situation.

No doubt, it was his household ills that burdened him past bearing, and made him go into Irville, when he heard of the recruiting, and take on to be a soldier. Such a wally-wallying as the news of this caused at every door; for the red-coats—from the persecuting days, when the black-cuffs rampaged through the country—soldiers that fought for hire were held in dread and as a horror among us, and terrible were the stories that were told of their cruelty and sinfulness; indeed, there had not been wanting in our own time a sample of what they were, as witness the murder of Jean Glaikit by Patrick O'Neil, the Irish corporal, anent which I have treated at large in the memorables of the year 1774.

A meeting of the session was forthwith held; for here was Thomas Wilson's wife and all his weans, an awful cess, thrown upon the parish; and it was settled outright among us, that Mr Docken, who was then an elder, but is since dead, a worthy man, with a soft tongue and a pleasing manner, should go to Irville, and get Thomas, if possible, released from the recruiters. But it was all in vain; the sergeant would not listen to him, for Thomas was a strapping lad; nor would the poor infatuated man himself agree to go back, but cursed like a cadger, and swore that, if he stayed any longer among his plagues, he would commit some rash act; so we were saddled with his family, which was the first taste and preeing of what war is when it comes into our hearths, and among the breadwinners.

The evil, however, did not stop here. Thomas, when he was dressed out in the king's clothes, came over to see his bairns, and take a farewell of his friends, and he looked so gallant, that the very next market-day another lad of the parish listed with him; but he was a ramplor, roving sort of a creature, and, upon the whole, it was thought he did well for the parish when he went to serve the king.

The listing was a catching distemper. Before the summer was over, other three of the farming lads went off with the drum, and there was a wailing in the parish, which made me preach a touching discourse. I likened the parish to a widow woman with a small family, sitting in their cottage by the fireside, herself spinning with an eident wheel, etting her best to get them a bit and a brat, and the poor weans all canty about the hearthstane—the little ones at their playocks, and the elder at their tasks—the callans working with hooks and lines to catch them a meal of fish in the morning—and the lassies working stockings to sell at the next Marymas fair.—And then I likened war to a calamity coming among them—the callans drowned at their fishing—the lassies led to a misdoing—and the feckless wee bairns laid on the bed of sickness, and their poor forlorn mother sitting by herself at the embers of a cauldrie fire; her tow done, and no a bodle to buy more; dropping a silent and salt tear for her babies, and thinking of days that war gone, and, like Rachel weeping for her children, she would not be comforted. With this I concluded, for my own heart filled full with the thought, and there was a deep sob in the church; verily it was Rachel weeping for her children.

In the latter end of the year, the man-of-war, with Charles Malcolm in her, came to the tail of the Bank at Greenock, to press men as it was thought, and Charles got leave from his captain to come and see his mother; and he brought with him Mr Howard, another midshipman, the son of a great parliament man in London, which, as we had tasted the sorrow, gave us some insight into the pomp of war. Charles was now grown up into a fine young man, rattling, light-hearted, and just a cordial of gladness, and his companion was every bit like him. They were dressed in their fine gold-laced garbs, and nobody knew Charles when he came to the clachan, but all wondered, for they were on horseback, and rode to the house where his mother lived when he went away, but which was then occupied by Miss Sabrina and her school. Miss Sabrina had never seen Charles, but she had heard of him; and when he enquired for his mother, she guessed who he was, and showed him the way to the new house that the captain had bought for her.

Miss Sabrina, who was a little overly perjink at times, behaved herself on this occasion with a true spirit, and gave her lassies the play immediately ; so that the news of Charles's return was spread by them like wildfire, and there was a wonderful joy in the whole town. When Charles had seen his mother, and his sister Effie, with that douce and well-mannered lad William, his brother—for of their meeting I cannot speak, not being present—he then came with his friend to see me at the manse, and was most jocose with me, and, in a way of great pleasance, got Mrs Balwhidder to ask his friend to sleep at the manse. In short, we had just a ploy the whole two days they stayed with us, and I got leave from Lord Eaglesham's steward to let them shoot on my lord's land ; and I believe every laddie wean in the parish attended them to the field. As for old Lady Macadam, Charles being, as she said, a near relation, and she having likewise some knowledge of his comrade's family, she was just in her element with them, though they were but youths ; for she was a woman naturally of a fantastical, and, as I have narrated, given to comical devices and pranks to a degree. She made for them a ball, to which she invited all the bonniest lasses, far and near, in the parish, and was out of the body with mirth, and had a fiddler from Irvile ; and it was thought by those that were there, that had she not been crippled with the rheumatics, she would have danced herself. But I was concerned to hear both Charles and his friend, like hungry hawks, rejoicing at the prospect of the war, hoping thereby, as soon as their midship term was out, to be made lieutenants ; saving this, there was no allay in the happiness they brought with them to the parish, and it was a delight to see how auld and young of all degrees made of Charles ; for we were proud of him, and none more than myself, though he began to take liberties with me, calling me old governor ; it was, however, in a warm-hearted manner, only I did not like it when any of the elders heard. As for his mother, she deported herself like a saint on the occasion. There was a temperance in the pleasure of her heart, and in her thankfulness, that is past the compass of words to describe. Even Lady Macadam, who never could think a serious thought all her days, said, in her wild way, that the gods had bestowed more care in the making of Mrs

Malcolm's temper, than on the bodies and souls of all the saints in the calendar. On the Sunday the strangers attended divine worship, and I preached a sermon purposely for them, and enlarged at great length and fulness on how David overcame Goliath; and they both told me that they had never heard such a good discourse; but I do not think they were great judges of preachings. How, indeed, could Mr Howard know any thing of sound doctrine, being educated, as he told me, at Eton school, a prelatie establishment! Nevertheless, he was a fine lad; and though a little given to frolic and diversion, he had a principle of integrity, that afterwards kythed into much virtue; for, during this visit, he took a notion of Effie Malcolm, and the lassie of him, then a sprightly and blooming creature, fair to look upon, and blithe to see; and he kept up a correspondence with her till the war was over, when, being a captain of a frigate, he came down among us, and they were married by me, as shall be related in its proper place.

CHAPTER XVIII.—YEAR 1777.

OLD WIDOW MIRKLAND—BLOODY ACCOUNTS OF THE WAR—HE GETS A NEWSPAPER
—GREAT FLOOD.

THIS may well be called the year of the heavy heart, for we had sad tidings of the lads that went away as soldiers to America. First, there was a boding in the minds of all their friends that they were never to see them more; and their sadness, like a mist spreading from the waters and covering the fields, darkened the spirit of the neighbours. Secondly, a sound was bruited about that the king's forces would have a hot and a sore struggle before the rebels were put down, if they were ever put down. Then came the cruel truth of all that the poor lads' friends had feared. But it is fit and proper that I should relate at length, under their several heads, the sorrows and afflictions as they came to pass.

One evening, as I was taking my walk alone, meditating my

discourse for the next Sabbath—it was shortly after Candlemas—it was a fine clear frosty evening, just as the sun was setting. Taking my walk alone, and thinking of the dreadfulness of Almighty power, and how that, if it was not tempered and restrained by infinite goodness, and wisdom, and mercy, the miserable sinner, man, and all things that live, would be in a woeful state, I drew near the beild where old Widow Mirkland lived by herself, who was grandmother to Jock Hempy, the ramplor lad, that was the second who took on for a soldier. I did not mind of this at the time; but, passing the house, I heard the croon, as it were, of a laden soul busy with the Lord, and, not to disturb the holy workings of grace, I paused, and listened. It was old Mizy Mirkland herself, sitting at the gable of the house, looking at the sun setting in all his glory behind the Arran hills; but she was not praying—only moaning to herself—an oozing out, as it might be called, of the spirit from her heart, then grievously oppressed with sorrow, and heavy bode-ments of grey hairs and poverty.—“Yonder it slips awa’,” she was saying, “and my poor bairn, that’s o’er the seas in America, is maybe looking on its bright face, thinking of his hame, and aiblins of me, that did my best to breed him up in the fear of the Lord; but I couldna warsle wi’ what was ordained. Ay, Jock! as ye look at the sun gaun down, as many a time, when ye were a wee innocent laddie at my knee here, I hae bade ye look at him as a type of your Maker, ye will hae a sore heart; for ye hae left me in my need, when ye should hae been near at hand to help me, for the hard labour and industry with which I brought you up. But it’s the Lord’s will. Blessed be the name of the Lord, that makes us to thole the tribulations of this world, and will reward us, through the mediation of Jesus, hereafter.” She wept bitterly as she said this, for her heart was tried, but the blessing of a religious contentment was shed upon her; and I stepped up to her, and asked about her concerns, for, saving as a parishioner, and a decent old woman, I knew little of her. Brief was her story; but it was one of misfortune.—“But I will not complain,” she said, “of the measure that has been meted unto me. I was left myself an orphan; when I grew up, and was married to my gudeman, I had known but scant and want.

Our days of felicity were few ; and he was ta'en awa' from me shortly after my Mary was born. A wailing baby, and a widow's heart, was a' he left me. I nursed her with my salt tears, and bred her in straits ; but the favour of God was with us, and she grew up to womanhood as lovely as the rose, and as blameless as the lily. In her time she was married to a farming lad. There never was a braver pair in the kirk, than on that day when they gaed there first as man and wife. My heart was proud, and it pleased the Lord to chastise my pride—to nip my happiness, even in the bud. The very next day he got his arm crushed. It never got well again ; and he fell into a decay, and died in the winter, leaving my Mary far on in the road to be a mother.

“ When her time drew near, we both happened to be working in the yard. She was delving to plant potatoes, and I told her it would do her hurt ; but she was eager to provide something, as she said, for what might happen. Oh ! it was an ill-omened word. The same night her trouble came on, and before the morning she was a cauld corpse, and another wee wee fatherless baby was greeting at my bosom—it was him that's noo awa' in America. He grew up to be a fine bairn, with a warm heart, but a light head, and, wanting the rein of a father's power upon him, was no sae douce as I could have wished ; but he was no man's foe save his own. I thought, and hoped, as he grew to years of discretion, he would have sobered, and been a consolation to my old age ; but he's gone, and he'll never come back—disappointment is my portion in this world, and I have no hope ; while I can do, I will seek no help, but threescore and fifteen can do little, and a small ail is a great evil to an aged woman, who has but the distaff for her breadwinner.”

I did all that I could to bid her be of good cheer, but the comfort of a hopeful spirit was dead within her ; and she told me, that by many tokens she was assured her bairn was already slain.—“ ‘Thrice,’ said she, “ I have seen his wraith—the first time he was in the pride of his young manhood, the next he was pale and wan, with a bloody and a gashy wound in his side, and the third time there was a smoke, and, when it cleared away, I saw him in a grave, with neither winding-sheet nor coffin.”

The tale of this pious and resigned spirit dwelt in mine ear, and, when I went home, Mrs Balwhidder thought that I had met with an o'ercome, and was very uneasy ; so she got the tea soon ready to make me better ; but scarcely had we tasted the first cup when a loud lamentation was heard in the kitchen. This was from that tawpy the wife of Thomas Wilson, with her three weans. They had been seeking their meat among the farmer houses, and, in coming home, forgathered on the road with the Glasgow carrier, who told them that news had come, in the London Gazette, of a battle, in which the regiment that Thomas had listed in was engaged, and had suffered loss both in rank and file ; none doubting that their head was in the number of the slain, the whole family grat aloud, and came to the manse, bewailing him as no more ; and it afterwards turned out to be the case, making it plain to me that there is a farseeing discernment in the spirit, that reaches beyond the scope of our incarnate senses.

But the weight of the war did not end with these afflictions ; for, instead of the sorrow that the listing caused, and the anxiety after, and the grief of the bloody tidings, operating as wholesome admonition to our young men, the natural perversity of the human heart was more and more manifested. A wonderful interest was raised among us all to hear of what was going on in the world ; insomuch, that I myself was no longer contented with the relation of the news of the month in the Scots Magazine, but joined with my father-in-law, Mr Kibbock, to get a newspaper twice a-week from Edinburgh. As for Lady Macadam, who being naturally an impatient woman, she had one sent to her three times a-week from London, so that we had something fresh five times every week ; and the old papers were lent out to the families who had friends in the wars. This was done on my suggestion, hoping it would make all content with their peaceable lot ; but dominion for a time had been given to the power of contrariness, and it had quite an opposite effect. It begot a curiosity, egging on to enterprise ; and, greatly to my sorrow, three of the bravest lads in the parish, or in any parish, all in one day took on with a party of the Scots Greys that were then lying in Ayr ; and nothing would satisfy the callans at Mr

Lorimore's school, but, instead of their innocent plays with girs, and shinties, and sicklike, they must go ranking like soldiers, and fight sham-fights in bodies. In short, things grew to a perfect hostility, for a swarm of weans came out from the schools of Irville on a Saturday afternoon, and, forgathering with ours, they had a battle with stones on the toll-road, such as was dreadful to hear of; for many a one got a mark that day he will take to the grave with him.

It was not, however, by accidents of the field only, that we were afflicted; those of the flood, too, were sent likewise against us. In the month of October, when the corn was yet in the nolms, and on the cold land by the river side, the water of Irville swelled to a great spait, from bank to brae, sweeping all before it, and roaring, in its might, like an agent of divine displeasure, sent forth to punish the inhabitants of the earth. The loss of the victual was a thing reparable, and those that suffered did not greatly complain; for, in other respects, their harvest had been plenteous: but the river, in its fury, not content with overflowing the lands, burst through the sandy hills with a raging force, and a riving asunder of the solid ground, as when the fountains of the great deep were broken up. All in the parish was a-foot, and on the hills, some weeping and wringing their hands, not knowing what would happen, when they beheld the landmarks of the waters deserted, and the river breaking away through the country, like the war-horse set loose in his pasture, and glorying in his might. By this change in the way and channel of the river, all the mills in our parish were left more than half a mile from dam or lade; and the farmers through the whole winter, till the new mills were built, had to travel through a heavy road with their victual, which was a great grievance, and added not a little to the afflictions of this unhappy year, which to me were not without a particularity, by the death of a full cousin of Mrs Balwhidder, my first wife; she was grievously burnt by looting over a candle. Her mutch, which was of the high structure then in vogue, took fire, and, being fastened with corking-pins to a great toupee, it could not be got off until she had sustained a deadly injury, of which, after lingering long, she was kindly eased by her removal from

trouble. This sore accident was to me a matter of deep concern and cogitation; but as it happened in Tarbolton, and no in our parish, I have only alluded to it to show, that when my people were chastised by the hand of Providence, their pastor was not spared, but had a drop from the same vial.

CHAPTER XIX.—YEAR 1778.

REVIVAL OF THE SMUGGLING TRADE—BETTY AND JANET PAWKIE, AND ROBIN BICKER, AN EXCISEMAN, COME TO THE PARISH—THEIR DOINGS—ROBIN IS SUCCEDED BY MUNGO ARGYLE—LORD EAGLESHAM ASSISTS WILLIAM MALCOLM.

THIS year was as the shadow of the bygone: there was less actual suffering, but what we came through cast a gloom among us, and we did not get up our spirits till the spring was far advanced; the corn was in the ear, and the sun far towards midsummer height, before there was any regular show of gladness in the parish.

It was clear to me that the wars were not to be soon over; for I noticed, in the course of this year, that there was a greater christening of lad bairns than had ever been in any year during my incumbency; and grave and wise persons, observant of the signs of the times, said, that it had been long held as a sure prognostication of war, when the births of male children outnumbered that of females.

Our chief misfortune in this year was a revival of that wicked mother of many mischiefs, the smuggling trade, which concerned me greatly; but it was not allowed to it to make any thing like a permanent stay among us, though in some of the neighbouring parishes, its ravages, both in morals and property, were very distressing, and many a mailing was sold to pay for the triumphs of the cutters and gaugers; for the government was by this time grown more eager, and the war caused the king's ships to be out and about, which increased the trouble of the smugglers, whose wits in their turn were thereby much sharpened.

After Mrs Malcolm, by the settlement of Captain Macadam,

had given up her dealing, two maiden women, that were sisters, Betty and Janet Pawkie, came in among us from Ayr, where they had friends in league with some of the laigh land folk, that carried on the contraband with the Isle of Man, which was the very eye of the smuggling. They took up the tea-selling, which Mrs Malcolm had dropped, and did business on a larger scale, having a general huxtry, with parliament-cakes, and candles, and pincushions, as well as other groceries, in their window. Whether they had any contraband dealings, or were only backbitten, I cannot take it upon me to say; but it was jealousied in the parish that the meal in the sacks, that came to their door at night, and was sent to the Glasgow market in the morning, was not made of corn. They were, however, decent women, both sedate and orderly; the eldest, Betty Pawkie, was of a manly stature, and had a long beard, which made her have a coarse look; but she was, nevertheless, a worthy, well-doing creature, and at her death she left ten pounds to the poor of the parish, as may be seen in the mortification board that the session put up in the kirk as a testification and an example.

Shortly after the revival of the smuggling, an exciseman was put among us, and the first was Robin Bicker, a very civil lad that had been a flunkey with Sir Hugh Montgomerie, when he was a resider in Edinburgh, before the old Sir Hugh's death. He was a queer fellow, and had a coothy way of getting in about folk, the which was very serviceable to him in his vocation; nor was he overly gleg: but when a job was ill done, and he was obliged to notice it, he would often break out on the smugglers for being so stupid; so that for an exciseman he was wonderful well liked, and did not object to a waught of brandy at a time, when the auld wives ca'd it well-water. It happened, however, that some unneighbourly person sent him notice of a clecking of tea chests, or brandy kegs, at which both Jenny and Betty Pawkie were the howdies. Robin could not but therefore enter their house; however, before going in, he just cried at the door to somebody on the road, so as to let the twa industrious lassies hear he was at hand. They were not slack in closing the trance-door, and putting stoups and stools behind it, so as to cause trouble, and give time before any body could

get in. They then emptied their chaff-bed, and filled the tike-ing with tea, and Betty went in on the top, covering herself with the blanket, and graining like a woman in labour. It was thought that Robin Bicker himself would not have been overly particular in searching the house, considering there was a woman seemingly in the dead-thraws; but a sorner, an incomer from the east country, and that hung about the change-house as a divor hostler, that would rather gang a day's journey in the dark than turn a spade in daylight, came to him as he stood at the door, and went in with him to see the sport. Robin, for some reason, could not bid him go away, and both Betty and Janet were sure he was in the plot against them; indeed, it was always thought he was an informer, and no doubt he was something not canny, for he had a down look.

It was some time before the doorway was cleared of the stoups and stools, and Jenny was in great concern, and flustered, as she said, for her poor sister, who was taken with a heart-colic. "I'm sorry for her," said Robin, "but I'll be as quiet as possible;" and so he searched all the house, but found nothing; at the which his companion, the divor east country hostler, swore an oath that could not be misunderstood; so, without more ado, but as all thought against the grain, Robin went up to sympathize with Betty in the bed, whose groans were loud and vehement. "Let me feel your pulse," said Robin, and he looted down as she put forth her arm from aneath the clothes, and laying his hand on the bed, cried, "Hey! what's this? this is a costly filling." Upon which Betty jumpet up quite recovered, and Jenny fell to the wailing and railing, while the hostler from the east country took the bed of tea on his back, to carry it to the change-house, till a cart was gotten to take it into the custom-house at Irville.

Betty Pawkie being thus suddenly cured, and grudging the loss of property, took a knife in her hand, and as the divor was crossing the burn at the stepping-stones that lead to the back of the change-house, she ran after him and ripped up the tike-ing, and sent all the tea floating away on the burn, which was thought a brave action of Betty, and the story not a little helped to lighten our melancholy meditations.

Robin Bicker was soon after this affair removed to another district, and we got in his place one Mungo Argyle, who was as proud as a provost, being come of Highland parentage. Black was the hour he came among my people; for he was needy and greedy, and rode on the top of his commission. Of all the manifold ills in the train of smuggling, surely the excisemen are the worst, and the setting of this rabiator over us was a severe judgment for our sins. But he suffered for't, and peace be with him in the grave, where the wicked cease from troubling!

Willie Malcolm, the youngest son of his mother, had by this time learned all that Mr Lorimore, the schoolmaster, could teach; and as it was evidenced to every body, by his mild manners and saintliness of demeanour, that he was a chosen vessel, his mother longed to fulfil his own wish, which was doubtless the natural working of the act of grace that had been shed upon him; but she had not the wherewithal to send him to the college of Glasgow, where he was desirous to study, and her just pride would not allow her to cress his brother-in-law, the Captain Macadam, whom, I should now mention, was raised in the end of this year, as we read in the newspapers, to be a major. I thought her in this somewhat unreasonable, for she would not be persuaded to let me write to the captain; but when I reflected on the good that Willie Malcolm might in time do as a preacher, I said nothing more to her, but indited a letter to the Lord Eaglesham, setting forth the lad's parts, telling who he was and all about his mother's scruples; and, by the retour of the post from London, his lordship sent me an order on his steward, to pay me twenty pounds towards equipping my protégée, as he called Willie, with a promise to pay for his education, which was such a great thing for his lordship to do off-hand on my recommendation, that it won him much affection throughout the country side; and folk began to wonder, rehearsing the great things, as was said, that I had gotten my lord at different times, and on divers occasions, to do, which had a vast of influence among my brethren of the presbytery, and they grew into a state of greater cordiality with me, looking on me as a man having authority; but I was none thereat lifted up, for not being gifted with the power of a kirk-filling eloquence, I

was but little sought for at sacraments, and fasts, and solemn days, which was doubtless well ordained; for I had no motive to seek fame in foreign pulpits, but was left to walk in the paths of simplicity within my own parish. To eschew evil myself, and to teach others to do the same, I thought the main duties of the pastoral office, and with a sincere heart endeavoured what in me lay to perform them with meekness, sobriety, and a spirit wakeful to the inroads of sin and Satan. But oh, the sordidness of human nature!—The kindness of the Lord Eaglesham's own disposition was ascribed to my influence, and many a dry answer I was obliged to give to applicants that would have me trouble his lordship, as if I had a claim upon him. In the ensuing year, the notion of my cordiality with him came to a great head, and brought about an event, that could not have been forethought by me as a thing within the compass of possibility to bring to pass.

CHAPTER XX.—YEAR 1779.

HE GOES TO EDINBURGH TO ATTEND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY—PREACHES BEFORE THE COMMISSIONER.

I WAS named in this year for the General Assembly, and Mrs Balwhidder, by her continual thrift, having made our purse able to stand a shake against the wind, we resolved to go into Edinburgh in a creditable manner. Accordingly, in conjunct with Mrs Dalrymple, the lady of a major of that name, we hired the Irville chaise, and we put up in Glasgow at the Black Boy, where we stayed all night. Next morning, by seven o'clock, we got into the fly-coach for the capital of Scotland, which we reached after a heavy journey about the same hour in the evening, and put up at the public where it stopped till the next day; for really both me and Mrs Balwhidder were worn out with the undertaking, and found a cup of tea a vast refreshment.

Betimes, in the morning, having taken our breakfast, we got a caddy to guide us and our wallise to Widow M'Vicar's, at the

head of the Covenanters' Close. She was a relation to my first wife, Betty Lanshaw, my own full cousin that was, and we had advised her, by course of post, of our coming, and intendment to lodge with her as uncos and strangers. But Mrs M'Vicar kept a cloth shop, and sold plaidings and flannels, besides Yorkshire superfines, and was used to the sudden incoming of strangers, especially visitants, both from the West and the North Highlands, and was withal a gawsy furthy woman, taking great pleasure in hospitality, and every sort of kindness and discretion. She would not allow of such a thing as our being lodgers in her house, but was so cagey to see us, and to have it in her power to be civil to a minister, as she was pleased to say, of such repute, that nothing less would content her but that we must live upon her, and partake of all the best that could be gotten for us within the walls of "the gude town."

When we found ourselves so comfortable, Mrs Balwhidder and me waited on my patron's family that was, the young ladies, and the laird, who had been my pupil, but was now an advocate high in the law. They likewise were kind also. In short, every body in Edinburgh were in a manner wearisome kind, and we could scarcely find time to see the Castle and the palace of Holyroodhouse, and that more sanctified place, where the Maccabeus of the Kirk of Scotland, John Knox, was wont to live.

Upon my introduction to his grace the Commissioner, I was delighted and surprised to find the Lord Eaglesham at the levee, and his lordship was so glad on seeing me, that he made me more kenspeckle than I could have wished to have been in his grace's presence; for, owing to the same, I was required to preach before his grace, upon a jocose recommendation of his lordship; the which gave me great concern, and daunted me, so that in the interim I was almost bereft of all peace and studious composure of mind. Fain would I have eschewed the honour that was thus thrust upon me; but both my wife and Mrs M'Vicar were just lifted out of themselves with the thought.

When the day came, I thought all things in this world were loosened from their hold, and that the sure and steadfast earth itself was grown coggly beneath my feet, as I mounted the pulpit. With what sincerity I prayed for help that day! and

never stood man more in need of it; for through all my prayer the congregation was so watchful and still, doubtless to note if my doctrine was orthodox, that the beating of my heart might have been heard to the uttermost corners of the kirk.

I had chosen as my text, from Second Samuel, xixth chapter and 35th verse, these words—"Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Wherefore, then, should thy servant be yet a burden to the king?" And hardly had I with a trembling voice read the words, when I perceived an awful stir in the congregation; for all applied the words to the state of the church, and the appointment of his grace the Commissioner. Having paused after giving out the text, the same fearful and critical silence again ensued, and every eye was so fixed upon me, that I was for a time deprived of courage to look about; but Heaven was pleased to compassionate my infirmity, and as I proceeded, I began to warm as in my own pulpit. I described the gorgeous Babylonian harlot riding forth in her chariots of gold and silver, with trampling steeds and a hurricane of followers, drunk with the cup of abominations, all shouting with revelry, and glorying in her triumph, treading down in their career those precious pearls, the saints and martyrs, into the mire beneath their swinish feet. "Before her you may behold Wantonness playing the tinkling cymbal, Insolence beating the drum, and Pride blowing the trumpet. Every vice is there with his emblems; and the seller of pardons, with his crucifix and triple crown, is distributing his largess of perdition. The voices of men shout to set wide the gates, to give entrance to the queen of nations, and the gates are set wide, and they all enter. The avenging gates close on them—they are all shut up in hell."

There was a sigh in the kirk as I said these words; for the vision I described seemed to be passing before me as I spoke, and I felt as if I had witnessed the everlasting destruction of Antichrist, and the worshippers of the Beast. But soon recovering myself, I said in a soft and gentle manner, "Look at yon lovely creature in virgin-raiment, with the Bible in her hand. See how mildly she walks along, giving alms to the poor as she passes on towards the door of that lowly dwelling—Let us follow her in—She takes her seat in the chair at the bedside of the

poor old dying sinner; and as he tosses in the height of penitence and despair, she reads to him the promise of the Saviour—‘ This night thou shalt be with me in Paradise;’ and he embraces her with transports, and, falling back on his pillow, calmly closes his eyes in peace. She is the true religion; and when I see what she can do even in the last moments of the guilty, well may we exclaim, when we think of the symbols and pageantry of the departed superstition, Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? No; let us cling to the simplicity of the Truth that is now established in our native land.”

At the conclusion of this clause of my discourse, the congregation, which had been all so still and so solemn, never coughing, as was often the case among my people, gave a great rustle, changing their positions, by which I was almost overcome; however, I took heart and ventured on, and pointed out that, with our Bible and an orthodox priesthood, we stood in no need of the king’s authority, however bound we were, in temporal things, to respect it; and I showed this at some length, crying out in the words of my text, “ Wherefore, then, should thy servant be yet a burden to the king?” in the saying of which I happened to turn my eyes towards his grace the Commissioner, as he sat on the throne, and I thought his countenance was troubled, which made me add, that he might not think I meant him any offence, “ That the King of the Church was one before whom the great, and the wise, and the good—all doomed and sentenced convicts—implore his mercy.” “ It is true,” said I, “ that in the days of his tribulation he was wounded for our iniquities, and died to save us; but, at his death, his greatness was proclaimed by the quick and the dead. There was sorrow, and there was wonder, and there was rage, and there was remorse; but there was no shame there—none blushed on that day at that sight but yon glorious luminary.” The congregation rose, and looked round, as the sun that I pointed at shone in at the window. I was disconcerted by their movement, and my spirit was spent, so that I could say no more.

When I came down from the pulpit, there was a great pressing in of acquaintance and ministers, who lauded me exceedingly;

but I thought it could be only in derision, therefore I slipped home to Mrs M'Vicar's as fast as I could.

Mrs M'Vicar, who was a clever, hearing-all sort of a neighbour, said my sermon was greatly thought of, and that I had surprised every body; but I was fearful there was something of jocularly at the bottom of this, for she was a flaunty woman, and liked well to give a good-humoured gibe or jeer. However, his grace the Commissioner was very thankful for the discourse, and complimented me on what he called my apostolical earnestness; but he was a courteous man, and I could not trust to him, especially as my Lord Eaglesham had told me in secrecy before—it's true, it was in his gallanting way—that, in speaking of the king's servant as I had done, I had rather gone beyond the bounds of modern moderation. Altogether, I found neither pleasure nor profit in what was thought so great an honour, but longed for the privacy of my own narrow pasture, and little flock.

It was in this visit to Edinburgh that Mrs Balwhidder bought her silver teapot, and other ornamental articles; but this was not done, as she assured me, in a vain spirit of bravery, which I could not have abided, but because it was well known that tea draws better in a silver pot, and drinks pleasanter in a china cup, than out of any other kind of cup or teapot.

By the time I got home to the manse, I had been three whole weeks and five days absent, which was more than all my absences together, from the time of my placing; and my people were glowing with satisfaction when they saw us driving in a Glasgow chaise through the clachan to the manse.

The rest of the year was merely a quiet succession of small incidents, none of which are worthy of notation, though they were all severally, no doubt, of aught somewhere, as they took up both time and place in the coming to pass, and nothing comes to pass without helping onwards to some great end; each particular little thing that happens in the world being a seed sown by the hand of Providence to yield an increase, which increase is destined, in its turn, to minister to some higher purpose, until at last the issue affects the whole earth. There is nothing in all the world that doth not advance the cause of goodness; no, not even

the sins of the wicked, though, through the dim casement of her mortal tabernacle, the soul of man cannot discern the method thereof.

CHAPTER XXI.—YEAR 1780.

LORD GEORGE GORDON—REPORT OF AN ILLUMINATION.

THIS was, among ourselves, another year of few events. A sound, it is true, came among us of a design, on the part of the government in London, to bring back the old harlotry of papistry ; but we spent our time in the lea of the hedge, and the lown of the hill. Some there were that a panic seized upon when they heard of Lord George Gordon, that zealous Protestant, being committed to the Tower ; but for my part, I had no terror upon me, for I saw all things around me going forward improving ; and I said to myself, it is not so when Providence permits scathe and sorrow to fall upon a nation. Civil troubles, and the casting down of thrones, is always forewarned by want and poverty striking the people. What I have, therefore, chiefly to record as the memorables of this year, are things of small import—the main of which are, that some of the neighbouring lairds, taking example by Mr Kibbock, my father-in-law that was, began in this fall to plant the tops of their hills with mounts of fir-trees ; and Mungo Argyle, the exciseman, just herried the poor smugglers to death, and made a power of prize-money, which, however, had not the wonted effect of riches, for it brought him no honour ; and he lived in the parish like a leper, or any other kind of excommunicated person.

But I should not forget a most droll thing that took place with Jenny Gaffaw, and her daughter. They had been missed from the parish for some days, and folk began to be uneasy about what could have become of the two silly creatures ; till one night, at the dead hour, a strange light was seen beaming and burning at the window of the bit hole where they lived. It was first observed by Lady Macadam, who never went to bed at

any Christian hour, but sat up reading her new French novels and play-books with Miss Sabrina, the schoolmistress. She gave the alarm, thinking that such a great and continuous light from a lone house, where never candle had been seen before, could be nothing less than the flame of a burning. And sending Miss Sabrina and the servants to see what was the matter, they beheld daft Jenny, and her as daft daughter, with a score of candle douns, (Heaven only knows where they got them!) placed in the window, and the twa fools dancing, and linking, and admiring before the door. "What's all this about, Jenny," said Miss Sabrina.—"Awa' wi' you, awa' wi' you—ye wicked pope, ye whore of Babylon—is na it for the glory of God, and the Protestant religion? d'ye think I will be a pope as long as light can put out darkness?"—And with that the mother and daughter began again to leap and dance as madly as before.

It seems that poor Jenny, having heard of the luminations that were lighted up through the country on the ending of the Popish Bill, had, with Meg, travelled by themselves into Glasgow, where they had gathered or begged a stock of candles, and coming back under the cloud of night, had surprised and alarmed the whole clachan, by lighting up their window in the manner that I have described. Poor Miss Sabrina, at Jenny's uncivil salutation, went back to my lady with her heart full, and would fain have had the idiots brought to task before the session, for what they had said to her. But I would not hear tell of such a thing, for which Miss Sabrina owed me a grudge that was not soon given up. At the same time, I was grieved to see the testimonies of joyfulness for a holy victory, brought into such disrepute by the ill-timed demonstrations of the two irreclaimable naturals, that had not a true conception of the cause for which they were triumphing.

CHAPTER XXII.—YEAR 1781.

ARGYLE, THE EXCISEMAN, GROWS A GENTLEMAN—LORD EAGLESHAM'S CONCUBINE
—HIS DEATH—THE PARISH CHILDREN AFFLICTED WITH THE MEASLES.

If the two last years passed o'er the heads of me and my people without any manifest dolour, which is a great thing to say for so long a period in this world, we had our own trials and tribulations in the one of which I have now to make mention. Mungo Argyle, the exciseman, waxing rich, grew proud and petulant, and would have ruled the country side with a rod of iron. Nothing less would serve him than a fine horse to ride on, and a world of other conveniences and luxuries, as if he had been on an equality with gentlemen. And he bought a grand gun, which was called a fowling-piece; and he had two pointer dogs, the like of which had not been seen in the parish since the planting of the Eaglesham-wood on the moorland, which was four years before I got the call. Every body said the man was fey; and truly, when I remarked him so gallant and gay on the Sabbath at the kirk, and noted his glowing face and gleg een, I thought at times there was something no canny about him. It was indeed clear to be seen, that the man was hurried out of himself; but nobody could have thought that the death he was to dree would have been what it was.

About the end of summer my Lord Eaglesham came to the castle, bringing with him an English madam, that was his Miss. Some days after he came down from London, as he was riding past the manse, his lordship stopped to enquire for my health, and I went to the door to speak to him. I thought that he did not meet me with that blithe countenance he was wont, and in going away, he said with a blush, "I fear I dare not ask you to come to the castle." I had heard of his concubine, and I said, "In saying so, my lord, you show a spark of grace; for it would not become me to see what I have heard; and I am surprised, my lord, you will not rather take a lady of your own." He looked kindly, but confused, saying, he did not know where to get one; so seeing his shame, and not wishing to put him out of

conceit entirely with himself, I replied, "Na, na, my lord, there's nobody will believe that, for there never was a silly Jock, but there was as silly a Jenny," at which he laughed heartily, and rode away. But I know not what was in't; I was troubled in mind about him, and thought, as he was riding away, that I would never see him again; and sure enough it so happened; for the next day, being airing in his coach with Miss Spangle, the lady he had brought, he happened to see Mungo Argyle with his dogs and his gun, and my lord being as particular about his game as the other was about boxes of tea and kegs of brandy, he jumped out of the carriage, and ran to take the gun. Words passed, and the exciseman shot my lord. Never shall I forget that day; such riding, such running, the whole country side afoot; but the same night my lord breathed his last; and the mad and wild reprobate that did the deed was taken up and sent off to Edinburgh. This was a woeful riddance of that oppressor, for my lord was a good landlord and a kind-hearted man; and albeit, though a little thoughtless, was aye ready to make his power, when the way was pointed out, minister to good works. The whole parish mourned for him, and there was not a sorer heart in all its bounds than my own. Never was such a sight seen as his burial: the whole country side was there, and all as solemn as if they had been assembled in the valley of Jehoshaphat in the latter day. The hedges where the funeral was to pass were clad with weans, like bunches of hips and haws, and the kirkyard was as if all its own dead were risen. Never, do I think, was such a multitude gathered together. Some thought there could not be less than three thousand grown men, besides women and children.

Scarcely was this great public calamity past, for it could be reckoned no less, when one Saturday afternoon, as Miss Sabrina, the schoolmistress, was dining with Lady Macadam, her ladyship was stricken with the paralytics, and her face so thrown in the course of a few minutes, that Miss Sabrina came flying to the manse for the help and advice of Mrs Balwhidder. A doctor was gotten with all speed by express; but her ladyship was smitten beyond the reach of medicine. She lived, however, some time after; but oh! she was such an object, that it was a

grief to see her. She could only mutter when she tried to speak, and was as helpless as a baby. Though she never liked me, nor could I say there was many things in her demeanour that pleased me; yet she was a free-handed woman to the needful, and when she died she was more missed than it was thought she could have been.

Shortly after her funeral, which was managed by a gentleman sent from her friends in Edinburgh, that I wrote to about her condition, the Major, her son, with his lady, Kate Malcolm, and two pretty bairns, came and stayed in her house for a time, and they were a great happiness to us all, both in the way of drinking tea, and sometimes taking a bit dinner, their only mother now, the worthy and pious Mrs Malcolm, being regularly of the company.

Before the end of the year, I should mention, that the fortune of Mrs Malcolm's family got another shove upwards, by the promotion of her second son, Robert Malcolm, who, being grown an expert and careful mariner, was made captain of a grand ship, whereof Provost Maitland of Glasgow, that was kind to his mother in her distresses, was the owner. But that douce lad Willie, her youngest son, who was at the university of Glasgow under the Lord Eaglesham's patronage, was like to have suffered a blight. However, Major Macadam, when I spoke to him anent the young man's loss of his patron, said, with a pleasant generosity, he should not be stickit; and, accordingly, he made up, as far as money could, for the loss of his lordship; but there was none that made up for the great power and influence, which, I have no doubt, the Earl would have exerted in his behalf, when he was ripened for the church. So that although in time William came out a sound and heart-searching preacher, he was long obliged, like many another unfriended saint, to cultivate sand, and wash Ethiopians in the shape of an east country gentleman's camstrairy weans; than which, as he wrote me himself, there cannot be on earth a greater trial of temper. However, in the end he was rewarded, and is not only now a placed minister, but a doctor of divinity.

The death of Lady Macadam was followed by another parochial misfortune; for, considering the time when it happened, we

could count it as nothing less. Auld Thomas Howkings, the betheral, fell sick, and died in the course of a week's illness, about the end of November; and the measles coming at that time upon the parish, there was such a smashery of the poor weans as had not been known for an age; insomuch that James Banes, the lad who was Thomas Howkings' helper, rose in open rebellion against the session during his superior's illness; and we were constrained to augment his pay, and to promise him the place if Thomas did not recover, which it was then thought he could not do. On the day this happened, there were three dead children in the clachan, and a panic and consternation spread about the burial of them when James Banes's insurrection was known, which made both me and the session glad to hush up the affair, that the heart of the public might have no more than the sufferings of individuals to hurt it.—Thus ended a year, on many accounts, heavy to be remembered.

CHAPTER XXIII.—YEAR 1782.

NEWS OF THE VICTORY OVER THE FRENCH FLEET—HE HAS TO INFORM MRS MALCOLM OF THE DEATH OF HER SON CHARLES IN THE ENGAGEMENT.

ALTHOUGH I have not been particular in noticing it, from time to time, there had been an occasional going off, at fairs and on market-days, of the lads of the parish as soldiers, and when Captain Malcolm got the command of his ship, no less than four young men sailed with him from the clachan; so that we were deeper and deeper interested in the proceedings of the doleful war that was raging in the plantations. By one post we heard of no less than three brave fellows belonging to us being slain in one battle, for which there was a loud and general lamentation.

Shortly after this, I got a letter from Charles Malcolm, a very pretty letter it indeed was: he had heard of my Lord Eaglesham's murder, and grieved for the loss, both because his lordship

was a good man, and because he had been such a friend to him and his family. "But," said Charles, "the best way that I can show my gratitude for his patronage, is to prove myself a good officer to my king and country." Which I thought a brave sentiment, and was pleased thereat; for somehow Charles, from the time he brought me the limes to make a bowl of punch, in his pocket from Jamaica, had built a nest of affection in my heart. But, oh! the wicked waistry of life in war. In less than a month after, the news came of a victory over the French fleet, and by the same post I got a letter from Mr Howard, that was the midshipman who came to see us with Charles, telling me that poor Charles had been mortally wounded in the action, and had afterwards died of his wounds. "He was a hero in the engagement," said Mr Howard, "and he died as a good and a brave man should."—These tidings gave me one of the sorest hearts I ever suffered, and it was long before I could gather fortitude to disclose the tidings to poor Charles's mother. But the callants of the school had heard of the victory, and were going shouting about, and had set the steeple bell a-ringing, by which Mrs Malcolm heard the news; and knowing that Charles's ship was with the fleet, she came over to the manse in great anxiety to hear the particulars, somebody telling her that there had been a foreign letter to me by the postman.

When I saw her I could not speak, but looked at her in pity, and, the tear fleeing up into my eyes, she guessed what had happened. After giving a deep and sore sigh, she enquired, "How did he behave? I hope well, for he was aye a gallant laddie!"—and then she wept very bitterly. However, growing calmer, I read to her the letter; and, when I had done, she begged me to give it to her to keep, saying, "It's all that I have now left of my pretty boy; but it's mair precious to me than the wealth of the Indies;" and she begged me to return thanks to the Lord for all the comforts and manifold mercies with which her lot had been blessed, since the hour she put her trust in him alone; and that was when she was left a penniless widow, with her five fatherless bairns.

It was just an edification of the spirit to see the Christian

resignation of this worthy woman. Mrs Balwhidder was confounded, and said, there was more sorrow in seeing the deep grief of her fortitude than tongue could tell.

Having taken a glass of wine with her, I walked out to conduct her to her own house; but in the way we met with a severe trial. All the weans were out parading with napkins and kail-blades on sticks, rejoicing and triumphing in the glad tidings of victory. But when they saw me and Mrs Malcolm coming slowly along, they guessed what had happened, and threw away their banners of joy; and standing all up in a row, with silence and sadness, along the kirkyard wall as we passed, showed an instinct of compassion that penetrated to my very soul. The poor mother burst into fresh affliction, and some of the bairns into an audible weeping; and, taking one another by the hand, they followed us to her door, like mourners at a funeral. Never was such a sight seen in any town before. The neighbours came to look at it as we walked along, and the men turned aside to hide their faces; while the mothers pressed their babies fondlier to their bosoms, and watered their innocent faces with their tears.

I prepared a suitable sermon, taking as the words of my text, "Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for your strength is laid waste." But when I saw around me so many of my people clad in complimentary mourning for the gallant Charles Malcolm, and that even poor daft Jenny Gaffaw, and her daughter, had on an old black riband; and when I thought of him, the spirited laddie, coming home from Jamaica with his parrot on his shoulder, and his limes for me, my heart filled full, and I was obliged to sit down in the pulpit, and drop a tear.

After a pause, and the Lord having vouchsafed to compose me, I rose up, and gave out that anthem of triumph, the 124th psalm, the singing of which brought the congregation round to themselves; but still I felt that I could not preach as I had meant to do; therefore I only said a few words of prayer, and, singing another psalm, dismissed the congregation.

CHAPTER XXIV.—YEAR 1783.

JANET GAFFAW'S DEATH AND BURIAL.

THIS was another Sabbath year of my ministry. It has left me nothing to record but a silent increase of prosperity in the parish. I myself had now in the bank more than a thousand pounds, and every thing was thriving around. My two bairns, Gilbert, that is now the merchant in Glasgow, was grown into a sturdy ramplor laddie, and Janet, that is married upon Dr Kittleword, the minister of Swappington, was as fine a lassie for her years as the eye of a parent could desire to see.

Shortly after the news of the peace, an event at which all gave themselves up to joy, a thing happened among us that at the time caused much talk; but although very dreadful, was yet not so serious, some how or other, as such an awsome doing should have been. Poor Jenny Gaffaw happened to take a heavy cold, and soon thereafter died. Meg went about from house to house, begging dead-clothes, and got the body straightened in a wonderful decent manner, with a plate of earth and salt placed upon it—an admonitory type of mortality and eternal life that has ill-advisedly gone out of fashion. When I heard of this, I could not but go to see how a creature that was not thought possessed of a grain of understanding, could have done so much herself. On entering the door, I beheld Meg sitting with two or three of the neighbouring kimmers, and the corpse laid out on a bed. “Come awa’, sir,” said Meg; “this is an altered house. They’re gane that keepit it bein; but, sir, we maun a’ come to this—we maun pay the debt o’ nature—death is a grim creditor, and a doctor but brittle bail when the hour of reckoning’s at han’! What a pity it is, mother, that you’re now dead, for here’s the minister come to see you. Oh, sir! but she would have had a proud heart to see you in her dwelling, for she had a genteel turn, and would not let me, her only daughter, mess or mell wi’ the lathron lasses of the clachan. Ay, ay, she brought me up with care, and edicated me for a lady: nae coarse wark darkened

my lily-white hands. But I maun work now ; I maun dree the penalty of man."

Having stopped some time, listening to the curious maun-ner- ing of Meg, I rose to come away ; but she laid her hand on my arm, saying, "No, sir, ye maun taste before ye gang ! My mother had aye plenty in her life, nor shall her latter day be needy."

Accordingly, Meg, with all the due formality common on such occasions, produced a bottle of water, and a dram-glass, which she filled and tasted, then presented to me, at the same time offering me a bit of bread on a slate. It was a consternation to every body how the daft creature had learnt all the ceremonies, which she performed in a manner past the power of pen to describe, making the solemnity of death, by her strange mockery, a kind of merriment, that was more painful than sorrow ; but some spirits are gifted with a faculty of observation, that, by the strength of a little fancy, enables them to make a wonderful and truthlike semblance of things and events, which they never saw, and poor Meg seemed to have this gift.

The same night, the session having provided a coffin, the body was put in, and removed to Mr Mutchkin's brewhouse, where the lads and lassies kept the late-wake.

Saving this, the year flowed in a calm, and we floated on in the stream of time towards the great ocean of eternity, like ducks and geese in the river's tide, that are carried down without being sensible of the speed of the current. Alas ! we have not wings like them, to fly back to the place we set out from.

CHAPTER XXV.—YEAR 1784.

A YEAR OF SUNSHINE AND PLEASANTNESS.

I HAVE ever thought that this was a bright year, truly an Ann. Dom., for in it many of the lads came home that had listed to be soldiers ; and Mr Howard, that was the midshipman, being now a captain of a man-of-war, came down from England and married

Effie Malcolm, and took her up with him to London, where she wrote to her mother, that she found his family people of great note, and more kind to her than she could write. By this time, also, Major Macadam was made a colonel, and lived with his lady in Edinburgh, where they were much respected by the genteeler classes, Mrs Macadam being considered a great unco among them for all manner of ladylike ornaments, she having been taught every sort of perfection in that way by the old lady, who was educated at the court of France, and was, from her birth, a person of quality. In this year, also, Captain Malcolm, her brother, married a daughter of a Glasgow merchant, so that Mrs Malcolm, in her declining years, had the prospect of a bright setting; but nothing could change the sober Christianity of her settled mind; and although she was strongly invited, both by the Macadams and the Howards, to see their felicity, she ever declined the same, saying—"No! I have been long out of the world, or rather, I have never been in it; my ways are not as theirs; and although I ken their hearts would be glad to be kind to me, I might fash their servants, or their friends might think me unlike other folk, by which, instead of causing pleasure, mortification might ensue: so I will remain in my own house, trusting that, when they can spare the time, they will come and see me."

There was a spirit of true wisdom in this resolution, for it required a forbearance that in weaker minds would have relaxed; but though a person of a most slender and delicate frame of body, she was a Judith in fortitude; and in all the fortune that seemed now smiling upon her, she never was lifted up, but bore always that pale and meek look, which gave a saintliness to her endeavours in the days of her suffering and poverty.

But when we enjoy most, we have least to tell. I look back on this year as on a sunny spot in the valley, amidst the shadows of the clouds of time; and I have nothing to record, save the remembrance of welcomings and weddings, and a meeting of bairns and parents, that the wars and the waters had long raged between. Contentment within the bosom, lent a livelier grace to the countenance of Nature; and every body said, that in this year the hedges were greener than common, the gowans brighter

on the brae, and the heads of the statelier trees adorned with a richer coronal of leaves and blossoms. All things were animated with the gladness of thankfulness, and testified to the goodness of their Maker.

CHAPTER XXVI.—YEAR 1785.

MR CAYENNE COMES TO THE PARISH—A PASSIONATE CHARACTER—HIS OUTRAGEOUS BEHAVIOUR AT THE SESSION-HOUSE.

WELL may we say, in the pious words of my old friend and neighbour, the Reverend Mr Keekie of Loupinton, that the world is such a wheel-carriage, that it might very properly be called the WHIRL'D. This reflection was brought home to me in a very striking manner, while I was preparing a discourse for my people, to be preached on the anniversary day of my placing, in which I took a view of what had passed in the parish during the five-and-twenty years that I had been, by the grace of God, the pastor thereof. The bairns, that were bairns when I came among my people, were ripened unto parents, and a new generation was swelling in the bud around me. But it is what happened that I have to give an account of.

This year the Lady Macadam's jointure-house that was, having been long without a tenant, a Mr Cayenne and his family, American loyalists, came and took it, and settled among us for a time. His wife was a clever woman, and they had two daughters, Miss Virginia and Miss Carolina; but he was himself an ettercap, a perfect spunkie of passion, as ever was known in town or country. His wife had a terrible time o't with him, and yet the unhappy man had a great share of common sense, and, saving the exploits of his unmanageable temper, was an honest and creditable gentleman. Of his humour we soon had a sample, as I shall relate at length all about it.

Shortly after he came to the parish, Mrs Balwhidder and me waited upon the family to pay our respects, and Mr Cayenne, in a free and hearty manner, insisted on us staying to dinner. His wife, I could see, was not satisfied with this, not being, as I

discerned afterwards, prepared to give an entertainment to strangers ; however, we fell into the misfortune of staying, and nothing could exceed the happiness of Mr Cayenne. I thought him one of the blithest bodies I had ever seen, and had no notion that he was such a tap of tow as in the sequel he proved himself.

As there was something extra to prepare, the dinner was a little longer of being on the table than usual, at which he began to fash, and every now and then took a turn up and down the room, with his hands behind his back, giving a short melancholious whistle. At length the dinner was served, but it was more scanty than he had expected, and this upset his good-humour altogether. Scarcely had I asked the blessing when he began to storm at his blackamoor servant, who was, however, used to his way, and did his work without minding him ; but by some neglect there was no mustard down, which Mr Cayenne called for in the voice of a tempest, and one of the servant lassies came in with the pot, trembling. It happened that, as it had not been used for a day or two before, the lid was clagged, and, as it were, glued in, so that Mr Cayenne could not get it out, which put him quite wud, and he attempted to fling it at Sambo, the black lad's head, but it stottit against the wall, and the lid flying open, the whole mustard flew in his own face, which made him a sight not to be spoken of. However it calmed him ; but really, as I had never seen such a man before, I could not but consider the accident as a providential reproof, and trembled to think what greater evil might fall out in the hands of a man so left to himself in the intemperance of passion.

But the worst thing about Mr Cayenne was his meddling with matters in which he had no concern ; for he had a most irksome nature, and could not be at rest, so that he was truly a thorn in our side. Among other of his strange doings, was the part he took in the proceedings of the session, with which he had as little to do, in a manner, as the man in the moon ; but having no business on his hands, he attended every sederunt, and from less to more, having no self-government, he began to give his opinion in our deliberations ; and often bred us trouble, by causing strife to arise.

It happened, as the time of the summer occasion was drawing

near, that it behoved us to make arrangements about the assistance; and upon the suggestion of the elders, to which I paid always the greatest deference, I invited Mr Keekie of Loupinton, who was a sound preacher, and a great expounder of the kittle parts of the Old Testament, being a man well versed in the Hebrew and etymologies, for which he was much revered by the old people that delighted to search the Scriptures. I had also written to Mr Sprose of Annock, a preacher of another sort, being a vehement and powerful thresher of the word, making the chaff and vain babbling of corrupt commentators to fly from his hand. He was not, however, so well liked, as he wanted that connect method which is needful to the enforcing of doctrine. But he had never been among us, and it was thought it would be a godly treat to the parish to let the people hear him. Besides Mr Sprose, Mr Waikle of Gowanry, a quiet hewer out of the image of holiness in the heart, was likewise invited, all in addition to our old stoops from the adjacent parishes.

None of these three preachers were in any estimation with Mr Cayenne, who had only heard each of them once; and he, happening to be present in the session-house at the time, enquired how we had settled. I thought this not a very orderly question, but I gave him a civil answer, saying, that Mr Keekie of Loupinton would preach on the morning of the fast-day, Mr Sprose of Annock in the afternoon, and Mr Waikle of Gowanry on the Saturday. Never shall I or the elders, while the breath of life is in our bodies, forget the reply. Mr Cayenne struck the table like a clap of thunder, and cried, "Mr Keekie of Loupinton, and Mr Sprose of Annock, and Mr Waikle of Gowanry, and all such trash, may go to — and be ——!" and out of the house he bounced, like a hand-ball stotting on a stone.

The elders and me were confounded, and for some time we could not speak, but looked at each other, doubtful if our ears heard aright. At long and length I came to myself; and, in the strength of God, took my place at the table, and said, this was an outrageous impiety not to be borne, which all the elders agreed to; and we thereupon came to a resolve, which I dictated myself, wherein we debarred Mr Cayenne from ever after enter-

ing, unless summoned, the session-house, the which resolve we directed the session-clerk to send to him direct, and thus we vindicated the insulted privileges of the church.

Mr Cayenne had cooled before he got home, and our paper coming to him in his appeased blood, he immediately came to the manse, and made a contrite apology for his hasty temper, which I reported, in due time and form, to the session, and there the matter ended. But here was an example plain to be seen of the truth of the old proverb, that as one door shuts another opens; for scarcely were we in quietness by the decease of that old light-headed woman, the Lady Macadam, till a full equivalent for her was given in this hot and fiery Mr Cayenne.

CHAPTER XXVII.—YEAR 1786.

REPAIRS REQUIRED FOR THE MANSE—BY THE SAGACIOUS MANAGEMENT OF MR KIBBOCK, THE HERITORS ARE MADE TO GIVE A NEW MANSE ALTOGETHER—THEY BEGIN, HOWEVER, TO LOOK UPON ME WITH A GRUDGE, WHICH PROVOKES ME TO CLAIM AN AUGMENTATION, WHICH I OBTAIN.

FROM the day of my settlement, I had resolved, in order to win the affections of my people, and to promote unison among the heritors, to be of as little expense to the parish as possible; but by this time the manse had fallen into a sore state of decay—the doors were wormed on the hinges—the casements of the windows chattered all the winter, like the teeth of a person perishing with cold, so that we had no comfort in the house; by which, at the urgent instigations of Mrs Balwhidder, I was obligated to represent our situation to the session. I would rather, having so much saved money in the bank, paid the needful repairs myself, than have done this, but she said it would be a rank injustice to our own family; and her father, Mr Kibbock, who was very long-headed, with more than a common man's portion of understanding, pointed out to me, that, as my life was but in my lip, it would be a wrong thing towards whomsoever was ordained to be my successor, to use the heritors

to the custom of the minister paying for the reparations of the manse, as it might happen he might not be so well able to afford it as me. So in a manner, by their persuasion, and the constraint of the justice of the case, I made a report of the infirmities both of doors and windows, as well as of the rotten state of the floors, which were constantly in want of cobbling. Over and above all, I told them of the sarking of the roof, which was as frush as a puddock-stool; insomuch, that in every blast some of the pins lost their grip, and the slates came hurling off.

The heritors were accordingly convened, and, after some deliberation, they proposed that the house should be seen to, and whitewashed and painted; and I thought this might do, for I saw they were terrified at the expense of a thorough repair; but when I went home and repeated to Mrs Balwhidder what had been said at the meeting, and my thankfulness at getting the heritors' consent to do so much, she was excessively angry, and told me, that all the painting and whitewashing in the world would avail nothing, for that the house was as a sepulchre full of rottenness; and she sent for Mr Kibbock, her father, to confer with him on the way of getting the matter put to rights.

Mr Kibbock came, and hearing of what had passed, pondered for some time, and then said, "All was very right! the minister (meaning me) has just to get tradesmen to look at the house, and write out their opinion of what it needs. There will be plaster to mend; so, before painting, he will get a plasterer. There will be a slater wanted; he has just to get a slater's estimate, and a wright's, and so forth, and when all is done, he will lay them before the session and the heritors, who, no doubt, will direct the reparations to go forward."

This was very pawkie counselling of Mr Kibbock, and I did not see through it at the time, but did as he recommended, and took all the different estimates, when they came in, to the session. The elders commended my prudence exceedingly for so doing, before going to work; and one of them asked me what the amount of the whole would be, but I had not cast it up. Some of the heritors thought that a hundred ponnds would be sufficient for the outlay; but judge of our consternation, when, in counting up all the sums of the different estimates together, we

found them well on towards a thousand pounds. "Better big a new house at once, than do this!" cried all the elders, by which I then perceived the draughtiness of Mr Kibbock's advice. Accordingly, another meeting of the heritors was summoned, and after a great deal of controversy, it was agreed that a new manse should be erected; and, shortly after, we contracted with Thomas Trowel, the mason, to build one for six hundred pounds, with all the requisite appurtenances, by which a clear gain was saved to the parish, by the foresight of Mr Kibbock, to the amount of nearly four hundred pounds. But the heritors did not mean to have allowed the sort of repair that his plan comprehended. He was, however, a far forecasting man; the like of him for natural parts not being in our country side; and nobody could get the whip-hand of him, either in a bargain or an improvement, when he once was sensible of the advantage. He was, indeed, a blessing to the shire, both by his example as a farmer, and by his sound and discreet advice in the contentions of his neighbours, being a man, as was a saying among the commonality, "wiser than the law and the fifteen Lords of Edinburgh."

The building of the new manse occasioned a heavy cess on the heritors, which made them overly ready to pick holes in the coats of me and the elders; so that, out of my forbearance and delicacy in time past, grew a lordliness on their part, that was an ill return for the years that I had endured no little inconveniency for their sake. It was not in my heart or principles to harm the hair of a dog; but when I discerned the austerity with which they were disposed to treat their minister, I bethought me that, for the preservation of what was due to the establishment and the upholding of the decent administration of religion, I ought to set my face against the sordid intolerance by which they were actuated. This notion I weighed well before divulging it to any person; but when I had assured myself as to the rectitude thereof, I rode over one day to Mr Kibbock's, and broke my mind to him about claiming out of the teinds an augmentation of my stipend, not because I needed it, but in case, after me, some bare and hungry gorbie of the Lord should be sent upon the parish, in no such condition to plea with the

heritors as I was. Mr Kibbock highly approved of my intent; and by his help, after much tribulation, I got an augmentation both in glebe and income; and to mark my reason for what I did, I took upon me to keep and clothe the wives and orphans of the parish, who lost their breadwinners in the American war. But for all that, the heritors spoke of me as an avaricious Jew, and made the hard-won fruits of Mrs Balwhidder's great thrift and good management a matter of reproach against me. Few of them would come to the church, but stayed away, to the detriment of their own souls hereafter, in order, as they thought, to punish me; so that, in the course of this year, there was a visible decay of the sense of religion among the better orders of the parish, and, as will be seen in the sequel, their evil example infected the minds of many of the rising generation.

It was in this year that Mr Cayenne bought the mailing of the Wheatrigs, but did not begin to build his house till the following spring; for being ill to please with a plan, he fell out with the builders, and on one occasion got into such a passion with Mr Trowel the mason, that he struck him a blow on the face, for which he was obligated to make atonement. It was thought the matter would have been carried before the Lords; but, by the mediation of Mr Kibbock, with my helping hand, a reconciliation was brought about, Mr Cayenne indemnifying the mason with a sum of money to say no more anent it; after which, he employed him to build his house, a thing that no man could have thought possible, who reflected on the enmity between them.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—YEAR 1787.

LADY MACADAM'S HOUSE IS CHANGED INTO AN INN—THE MAKING OF JELLY BECOMES COMMON IN THE PARISH—MEG GAFFAW IS PRESENT AT A PAYMENT OF VICTUAL—HER BEHAVIOUR.

THERE had been, as I have frequently observed, a visible improvement going on in the parish. From the time of the making of the toll-road, every new house that was built in the

clachan was built along that road. Among other changes thereby caused, the Lady Macadam's jointure-house that was, which stood in a pleasant parterre, inclosed within a stone wall and an iron gate, having a pillar with a pine-apple head on each side, came to be in the middle of the town. While Mr Cayenne inhabited the same, it was maintained in good order ; but on his flitting to his own new house on the Wheatrigs, the parterre was soon overrun with weeds, and it began to wear the look of a waste place. Robert Toddy, who then kept the change-house, and who had, from the lady's death, rented the coach-house for stabling, in this juncture thought of it for an inn ; so he set his own house to Thomas Treddles the weaver, whose son, William, is now the great Glasgow manufacturer, that has cotton-mills and steam-engines, and took "the Place," as it was called, and had a fine sign, THE CROSS-KEYS, painted and put up in golden characters, by which it became one of the most noted inns any where to be seen ; and the civility of Mrs Toddy was commended by all strangers. But although this transmutation from a change-house to an inn was a vast amendment, in a manner, to the parish, there was little amendment of manners thereby ; for the farmer lads began to hold dancings and other riotous proceedings there, and to bring, as it were, the evil practices of towns into the heart of the country. All sort of license was allowed as to drink and hours ; and the edifying example of Mr Mutchkins and his pious family, was no longer held up to the imitation of the wayfaring man.

Saving the mutation of "the Place" into an inn, nothing very remarkable happened in this year. We got into our new manse about the middle of March ; but it was rather damp, being new plastered, and it caused me to have a severe attack of the rheumatics in the fall of the year.

I should not, in my notations, forget to mark a new luxury that got in among the commonality at this time. By the opening of new roads, and the traffic thereon with carts and carriers, and by our young men that were sailors going to the Clyde, and sailing to Jamaica and the West Indies, heaps of sugar and coffee-beans were brought home, while many, among the kail-stocks and cabbages in their yards, had planted groset and berry

bushes ; which two things happening together, the fashion to make jam and jelly, which hitherto had been only known in the kitchens and confectionaries of the gentry, came to be introduced into the clachan. All this, however, was not without a plausible pretext ; for it was found that jelly was an excellent medicine for a sore throat, and jam a remedy as good as London candy for a cough, or a cold, or a shortness of breath. I could not, however, say that this gave me so much concern as the smuggling trade, only it occasioned a great fasherie to Mrs Balwhidder ; for, in the berry time, there was no end to the borrowing of her brass-pan to make jelly and jam, till Mrs Toddy of the Cross-Keys bought one, which, in its turn, came into request, and saved ours.

It was in the Martinmas quarter of this year that I got the first payment of my augmentation. Having no desire to rip up old sores, I shall say no more anent it, the worst being anticipated in my chronicle of the last year ; but there was a thing happened in the payment that occasioned a vexation at the time, of a very disagreeable nature. Daft Meg Gaffaw, who, from the tragical death of her mother, was a privileged subject, used to come to the manse on the Saturdays for a meal of meat ; and it so fell out that as, by some neglect of mine, no steps had been taken to regulate the disposal of the victual that constituted the means of the augmentation, some of the heritors, in an ungracious temper, sent what they called the tithe-boll (the Lord knows it was not the fiftieth !) to the manse, where I had no place to put it. This fell out on a Saturday night, when I was busy with my sermon, thinking not of silver or gold, but of much better ; so that I was greatly molested and disturbed thereby. Daft Meg, who sat by the kitchen chimley-lug, hearing a', said nothing for a time ; but when she saw how Mrs Balwhidder and me were put to, she cried out with a loud voice, like a soul under the inspiration of prophecy—"When the widow's cruse had filled all the vessels in the house, the Lord stopped the increase. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if your barns be filled, and your girnell-kists can hold no more, seek till ye shall find the tume basins of the poor, and therein pour the corn, and the oil, and the wine of your abundance ; so shall ye

be blessed of the Lord." The which words I took for an admonition, and directing the sacks to be brought into the dining-room and other chambers of the manse, I sent off the heritors' servants, that had done me this prejudice, with an unexpected thankfulness. But this, as I afterwards was informed, both them and their masters attributed to the greedy grasp of avarice, with which they considered me as misled; and having said so, nothing could exceed their mortification on Monday, when they heard (for they were of those who had deserted the kirk) that I had given by the precentor notice to every widow in the parish that was in need, to come to the manse and she would receive her portion of the partitioning of the augmentation. Thus, without any offence on my part, saving the strictness of justice, was a division made between me and the heritors; but the people were with me; and my own conscience was with me; and though the fronts of the lofts and the pews of the heritors were but thinly filled, I trusted that a good time was coming, when the gentry would see the error of their way. So I bent the head of resignation to the Lord, and, assisted by the wisdom of Mr Kibbock, adhered to the course I had adopted; but at the close of the year my heart was sorrowful for the schism; and my prayer on Hogmanay was one of great bitterness of soul, that such an evil had come to pass.

CHAPTER XXIX.—YEAR 1788.

A COTTON-MILL IS BUILT—THE NEW SPIRIT WHICH IT INTRODUCES AMONG THE PEOPLE.

It had been often remarked by ingenious men, that the Brawl burn, which ran through the parish, though a small, was yet a rapid stream, and had a wonderful capability for damming, and to turn mills. From the time that the Irvile water deserted its channel this brook grew into repute, and several mills and dams had been erected on its course. In this year a proposal came from Glasgow to build a cotton-mill on its banks, beneath the

Witch-linn, which being on a corner of the Wheatrig, the property of Mr Cayenne, he not only consented thereto, but took a part in the profit or loss therein; and, being a man of great activity, though we thought him, for many a day, a serpent-plague sent upon the parish, he proved thereby one of our greatest benefactors. The cotton-mill was built, and a spacious fabric it was—nothing like it had been seen before in our day and generation—and, for the people that were brought to work in it, a new town was built in the vicinity, which Mr Cayenne, the same being founded on his land, called Cayenneville, the name of the plantation in Virginia that had been taken from him by the rebellious Americans. From that day Fortune was lavish of her favours upon him; his property swelled, and grew in the most extraordinary manner, and the whole country side was stirring with a new life. For, when the mill was set agoing, he got weavers of muslin established in Cayenneville; and shortly after, but that did not take place till the year following, he brought women all the way from the neighbourhood of Manchester in England, to teach the lassie bairns in our old clachan tambouring.

Some of the ancient families, in their turreted houses, were not pleased with this innovation, especially when they saw the handsome dwellings that were built for the weavers of the mills, and the unstinted hand that supplied the wealth required for the carrying on of the business. It sank their pride into insignificance, and many of them would almost rather have wanted the rise that took place in the value of their lands, than have seen this incoming of what they called o'er-sea speculation. But, saving the building of the cotton-mill, and the beginning of Cayenneville, nothing more memorable happened in this year, still it was nevertheless a year of a great activity. The minds of men were excited to new enterprizes; a new genius, as it were, had descended upon the earth, and there was an erect and outlooking spirit abroad that was not to be satisfied with the taciturn regularity of ancient affairs. Even Miss Sabrina Hooky, the schoolmistress, though now waned from her meridian, was touched with the enlivening rod, and set herself to learn and to teach tambouring, in such a manner as to supersede by precept

and example that old time-honoured functionary, as she herself called it, the spinning-wheel, proving, as she did one night to Mr Kibbock and me, that, if more money could be made by a woman tambouring than by spinning, it was better for her to tambour than to spin.

But, in the midst of all this commercing and manufacturing, I began to discover signs of decay in the wonted simplicity of our country ways. Among the cotton-spinners and muslin weavers of Cayenneville were several unsatisfied and ambitious spirits, who clubbed together, and got a London newspaper to the Cross-Keys, where they were nightly in the habit of meeting and debating about the affairs of the French, which were then gathering towards a head. They were represented to me as lads by common in capacity, but with unsettled notions of religion. They were, however, quiet and orderly; and some of them since, at Glasgow, Paisley, and Manchester, even, I am told, in London, have grown into a topping way.

It seems they did not like my manner of preaching, and on that account absented themselves from public worship; which, when I heard, I sent for some of them, to convince them of their error with regard to the truth of divers points of doctrine; but they confounded me with their objections, and used my arguments, which were the old and orthodox proven opinions of the Divinity Hall, as if they had been the light sayings of a vain man. So that I was troubled, fearing that some change would ensue to my people, who had hitherto lived amidst the boughs and branches of the gospel unmolested by the fowler's snare, and I set myself to watch narrowly, and with a vigilant eye, what would come to pass.

There was a visible increase among us of worldly prosperity in the course of this year; insomuch that some of the farmers, who were in the custom of taking their vendibles to the neighbouring towns on the Tuesdays, the Wednesdays, and Fridays, were led to open a market on the Saturdays in our own clachan, the which proved a great convenience. But I cannot take it upon me to say, whether this can be said to have well begun in the present Ann. Dom., although I know that in the summer of the ensuing year it was grown into a settled custom; which I well

recollect by the Macadams coming with their bairns to see Mrs Malcolm, their mother, suddenly on a Saturday afternoon; on which occasion me and Mrs Balwhidder were invited to dine with them, and Mrs Malcolm bought in the market for the dinner that day, both mutton and fowls, such as twenty years before could not have been got for love or money on such a pinch. Besides, she had two bottles of red and white wine from the Cross-Keys, luxuries which, saving in the Breadland House in its best days, could not have been had in the whole parish, but must have been brought from a borough town; for Eaglesham Castle is not within the bounds of Dalmailing, and my observe does not apply to the stock and stores of that honourable mansion, but only to the dwellings of our own heritors, who were in general straitened in their circumstances, partly with upsetting, and partly by the eating rust of family pride, which hurt the edge of many a clever fellow among them, that would have done well in the way of trade, but sunk into divors for the sake of their genteelity

CHAPTER XXX.—YEAR 1789.

WILLIAM MALCOLM COMES TO THE PARISH AND PREACHES—THE OPINIONS UPON HIS SERMON.

THIS I have always reflected upon as one of our blessed years. It was not remarkable for any extraordinary occurrence; but there was a hopefulness in the minds of men, and a planning of new undertakings, of which, whatever may be the upshot, the devising is ever rich in the cheerful anticipations of good.

Another new line of road was planned, for a shorter cut to the cotton-mill, from the main road to Glasgow, and a public-house was opened in Cayenneville: the latter, however, was not an event that gave me much satisfaction; but it was a convenience to the inhabitants, and the carriers that brought the cotton-bags and took away the yarn twice a-week, needed a place of refreshment. And there was a stage-coach set up

thrice every week from Ayr, that passed through the town, by which it was possible to travel to Glasgow between breakfast and dinner time, a thing that could not, when I came to the parish, have been thought within the compass of man.

This stage-coach I thought one of the greatest conveniences that had been established among us; and it enabled Mrs Balwhidder to send a basket of her fresh butter into the Glasgow market, by which, in the spring and the fall of the year, she got a great price; for the Glasgow merchants are fond of excellent eatables, and the payment was aye ready money—Tam Whirlit the driver paying for the one basket when he took up the other.

In this year William Malcolm, the youngest son of the widow, having been some time a tutor in a family in the east country, came to see his mother, as indeed he had done every year from the time he went to the college; but this occasion was made remarkable by his preaching in my pulpit. His old acquaintance were curious to hear him; and I myself had a sort of a wish likewise, being desirous to know how far he was orthodox; so I thought fit, on the suggestion of one of the elders, to ask him to preach one day for me, which, after some fleecing, he consented to do. I think, however, there was a true modesty in his diffidence, although his reason was a weak one, being lest he might not satisfy his mother, who had as yet never heard him. Accordingly, on the Sabbath after, he did preach, and the kirk was well packed, and I was not one of the least attentive of the congregation. His sermon assuredly was well put together, and there was nothing to object to in his doctrine; but the elderly people thought his language rather too Englified, which I thought likewise; for I never could abide that the plain auld Kirk of Scotland, with her sober presbyterian simplicity, should borrow, either in word or in deed, from the language of the prelatie hierarchy of England. Nevertheless, the younger part of the congregation were loud in his praise, saying, there had not been heard before such a style of language in our side of the country. As for Mrs Malcolm, his mother, when I spoke to her anent the same, she said but little, expressing only her hope that his example would be worthy of his precepts; so that, upon the whole, it was a satisfaction to us all.

that he was likely to prove a stoop and upholding pillar to the Kirk of Scotland. And his mother had the satisfaction, before she died, to see him a placed minister, and his name among the authors of his country; for he published at Edinburgh a volume of Moral Essays, of which he sent me a pretty bound copy, and they were greatly creditable to his pen, though lacking somewhat of that birr and smeddum that is the juice and flavour of books of that sort.

CHAPTER XXXI.—YEAR 1790.

A BOOKSELLER'S SHOP IS SET UP AMONG THE HOUSES OF THE WEAVERS AT CAYENNEVILLE.

THE features of this Ann. Dom. partook of the character of its predecessor. Several new houses were added to the clachan; Cayenneville was spreading out with weavers' shops, and growing up fast into a town. In some respects it got the start of ours; for one day, when I was going to dine with Mr Cayenne at Wheatrig House, not a little to my amazement, did I behold a bookseller's shop opened there, with sticks of red and black wax, pouncet-boxes, pens, pocket-books, and new publications, in the window, such as the like of was only to be seen in cities and borough towns. And it was lighted at night by a patent lamp, which shed a wonderful beam, burning oil, and having no smoke. The man sold likewise perfumery, powder-puffs, trinkets, and Dublin dolls, besides penknives, Castile soap, and walking-sticks, together with a prodigy of other luxuries too tedious to mention.

Upon conversing with the man, for I was enchanted to go into this phenomenon, for as no less could I regard it, he told me that he had a correspondence with London, and could get me down any book published there within the same month in which it came out; and he showed me divers of the newest come out, of which I did not read even in the Scots Magazine till more than three months after, although I had till then

always considered that work as most interesting for its early intelligence. But what I was most surprised to hear, was, that he took in a daily London newspaper for the spinners and weavers, who paid him a penny a-week a-piece for the same; they being all greatly taken up with what, at the time, was going on in France.

This bookseller in the end, however, proved a whawp in our nest, for he was in league with some of the English reformers; and when the story took wind three years after, concerning the plots and treasons of the corresponding societies and democrats, he was fain to make a moonlight flitting, leaving his wife for a time to manage his affairs. I could not, however, think any ill of the man notwithstanding; for he had very correct notions of right and justice, in a political sense, and when he came into the parish he was as orderly and well-behaved as any other body; and conduct is a test that I have always found as good for a man's principles as professions. Nor, at the time of which I am speaking, was there any of that dread or fear of reforming the government that has since been occasioned by the wild and wasteful hand which the French employed in their revolution.

But, among other improvements, I should mention that a Doctor Marigold came and settled in Cayenneville, a small, round, happy-tempered man, whose funny stories were far better liked than his drugs. There was a doubt among some of the weavers if he was a skilful Esculapian; and this doubt led to their holding out an inducement to another medical man, Dr Tanzey, to settle there likewise, by which it grew into a saying, that at Cayenneville there was a doctor for health as well as sickness; for Dr Marigold was one of the best hands in the country at a pleasant punch-bowl, while Dr Tanzey had all the requisite knowledge of the faculty for the bedside.

It was in this year that the hour-plate and hand on the kirk steeple were renewed, as, indeed, may yet be seen by the date, though it be again greatly in want of fresh gilding; for it was by my advice that the figures of the Ann. Dom. were placed one in each corner. In this year, likewise, the bridge over the Brawl burn was built—a great convenience, in the winter time, to the parishioners that lived on the north side; for when there

happened to be a spait on the Sunday, it kept them from the kirk ; but I did not find that the bridge mended the matter, till after the conclusion of the war against the democrats, and the beginning of that which we are now waging with Boney, their child and champion. It is, indeed, wonderful to think of the occultation of grace that was taking place about this time, throughout the whole bound of Christendom ; for I could mark a visible darkness of infidelity spreading in the corner of the vineyard committed to my keeping, and a falling away of the vines from their wonted props and confidence in the truths of Revelation. But I said nothing. I knew that the faith could not be lost, and that it would be found purer and purer the more it was tried ; and this I have lived to see, many now being zealous members of the church, that were abundantly lukewarm at the period of which I am now speaking.

CHAPTER XXXII.—YEAR 1791.

I PLACE MY SON GILBERT IN A COUNTING-HOUSE AT GLASGOW—MY OBSERVATIONS ON GLASGOW—ON MY RETURN I PREACH AGAINST THE VANITY OF RICHES, AND BEGIN TO BE TAKEN FOR A BLACK-NEB.

IN the spring of this year, I took my son Gilbert in to Glasgow, to place him in a counting-house. As he had no inclination for any of the learned professions, and not having been there from the time when I was sent to the General Assembly, I cannot express my astonishment at the great improvements, surpassing far all that was done in our part of the country, which I thought was not to be paralleled. When I came afterwards to reflect on my simplicity in this, it was clear to me that we should not judge of the rest of the world by what we see going on around ourselves, but walk abroad into other parts, and thereby enlarge our sphere of observation, as well as ripen our judgment of things.

But although there was no doubt a great and visible increase of the city, loftier buildings on all sides, and streets that spread

their arms far into the embraces of the country, I thought the looks of the population were impaired, and that there was a greater proportion of long white faces in the Trongate, than when I attended the Divinity class. These, I was told, were the weavers and others concerned in the cotton trade, which I could well believe, for they were very like in their looks to the men of Cayenneville; but from living in a crowded town, and not breathing a wholesome country air between their tasks, they had a stronger cast of unhealthy melancholy. I was therefore very glad that Providence had placed in my hand the pastoral staff of a country parish; for it cut me to the heart to see so many young men, in the rising prime of life, already in the arms of a pale consumption. "If, therefore," said I to Mrs Balwhidder, when I returned home to the manse, "we live, as it were, within the narrow circle of ignorance, we are spared from the pain of knowing many an evil; and, surely, in much knowledge there is sadness of heart."

But the main effect of this was to make me do all in my power to keep my people contented with their lowly estate; for in that same spirit of improvement, which was so busy every where, I could discern something like a shadow, that showed it was not altogether of that pure advantage which avarice led all so eagerly to believe. Accordingly, I began a series of sermons on the evil and vanity of riches, and, for the most part of the year, pointed out in what manner they led the possessor to indulge in sinful luxuries, and how indulgence begat desire, and desire betrayed integrity and corrupted the heart; making it evident that the rich man was liable to forget his unmerited obligations to God, and to oppress the laborious and the needful when he required their services.

Little did I imagine, in thus striving to keep aloof the ravenous wolf Ambition from my guileless flock, that I was giving cause for many to think me an enemy to the king and government, and a perverter of Christianity, to suit levelling doctrines. But so it was. Many of the heritors considered me a black-neb, though I knew it not, but went on in the course of my duty, thinking only how best to preserve peace on earth and goodwill towards men. I saw, however an altered manner in the

deportment of several, with whom I had long lived in friendly terms. It was not marked enough to make me enquire the cause, but sufficiently plain to affect my ease of mind. Accordingly, about the end of this year, I fell into a dull way: my spirit was subdued, and at times I was aweary of the day, and longed for the night, when I might close my eyes in peaceful slumbers. I missed my son Gilbert, who had been a companion to me in the long nights, while his mother was busy with the lasses, and their ceaseless wheels and cardings, in the kitchen. Often could I have found it in my heart to have banned that never-ceasing industry, and to tell Mrs Balwhidder, that the married state was made for something else than to make napery and beetle blankets; but it was her happiness to keep all at work, and she had no pleasure in any other way of life, so I sat many a night by the fireside with resignation; sometimes in the study, and sometimes in the parlour, and, as I was doing nothing, Mrs Balwhidder said it was needless to light the candle. Our daughter Janet was in this time at a boarding-school in Ayr, so that I was really a most solitary married man.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—YEAR 1792.

TRoubled with low spirits—ACCIDENTAL MEETING WITH MR CAYENNE, WHO ENDEAVOURS TO REMOVE THE PREJUDICES ENTERTAINED AGAINST ME.

WHEN the spring in this year began to brighten on the brae, the cloud of dulness that had darkened and oppressed me all the winter somewhat melted away, and I could now and then joke again at the never-ending toil and trouble of that busiest of all bees, the second Mrs Balwhidder. But still I was far from being right: a small matter affected me, and I was overly given to walking by myself, and musing on things that I could tell nothing about—my thoughts were just the rack of a dream without form, and driving witlessly as the smoke that mounteth up, and is lost in the airy heights of the sky.

Heeding little of what was going on in the clachan, and taking

no interest in the concerns of any body, I would have been contented to die, but I had no ail about me. An accident, however, fell out, that, by calling on me for an effort, had the blessed influence of clearing my vapours almost entirely away.

One morning as I was walking on the sunny side of the road, where the footpath was in the next year made to the cotton-mill, I fell in with Mr Cayenne, who was seemingly much fashed—a small matter could do that at any time; and he came up to me with a red face and an angry eye. It was not my intent to speak to him; for I was grown loth to enter into conversation with any body, so I bowed and passed on. “What,” cried Mr Cayenne, “and will you not speak to me?” I turned round, and said meekly, “Mr Cayenne, I have no objections to speak to you; but having nothing particular to say, it did not seem necessary just now.”

He looked at me like a gled, and in a minute exclaimed, “Mad, by Jupiter! as mad as a March hare!” He then entered into conversation with me, and said, that he had noticed me an altered man, and was just so far on his way to the manse, to enquire what had befallen me. So, from less to more, we entered into the marrow of my case; and I told him how I had observed the estranged countenances of some of the heritors; at which he swore an oath, that they were a parcel of the damn’dest boobies in the country, and told me how they had taken it into their heads that I was a leveller. “But I know you better,” said Mr Cayenne, “and have stood up for you as an honest conscientious man, though I don’t much like your humdrum preaching. However, let that pass; I insist upon your dining with me to-day, when some of these arrant fools are to be with us, and the devil’s in’t if I don’t make you friends with them.” I did not think Mr Cayenne, however, very well qualified for a peacemaker, but, nevertheless, I consented to go; and having thus got an inkling of the cause of that cold back-turning which had distressed me so much, I made such an effort to remove the error that was entertained against me, that some of the heritors, before we separated, shook me by the hands with the cordiality of renewed friendship; and, as if to make amends for past neglect, there was no end to their invitations to dinner, which

had the effect of putting me again on my mettle, and removing the thick and muddy melancholious humour out of my blood.

But what confirmed my cure was the coming home of my daughter Janet from the Ayr boarding-school, where she had learnt to play on the spinnet, and was become a conversible lassie, with a competent knowledge, for a woman, of geography and history; so that when her mother was busy with the weariful booming wheel, she entertained me sometimes with a tune, and sometimes with her tongue, which made the winter nights fly cantily by.

Whether it was owing to the malady of my imagination throughout the greatest part of this year, or that really nothing particular did happen to interest me, I cannot say; but it is very remarkable that I have nothing remarkable to record—further, than I was at the expense myself of getting the manse rough-cast, and the window cheeks painted, with roans put up, rather than apply to the heritors; for they were always sorely fashed when called upon for outlay.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—YEAR 1793.

I DREAM A REMARKABLE DREAM, AND PREACH A SERMON IN CONSEQUENCE, APPLYING TO THE EVENTS OF THE TIMES—TWO DEMOCRATICAL WEAVER LADS BROUGHT BEFORE MR CAYENNE, AS JUSTICE OF PEACE.

ON the first night of this year I dreamt a very remarkable dream, which, when I now recall to mind at this distance of time, I cannot but think that there was a cast of prophecy in it. I thought that I stood on the tower of an old popish kirk, looking out at the window upon the kirkyard, where I beheld ancient tombs, with effigies and coats-of-arms on the wall thereof, and a great gate at the one side, and a door that led into a dark and dismal vault at the other. I thought all the dead that were lying in the common graves, rose out of their coffins; at the same time, from the old and grand monuments, with the effigies and coats-of-arms, came the great men, and the kings of

the earth with crowns on their heads, and globes and sceptres in their hands.

I stood wondering what was to ensue, when presently I heard the noise of drums and trumpets, and anon I beheld an army with banners entering in at the gate; upon which the kings and the great men came also forth in their power and array, and a dreadful battle was foughten; but the multitude that had risen from the common graves, stood afar off, and were but lookers-on.

The kings and their host were utterly discomfited. They were driven within the doors of their monuments, their coats-of-arms were broken off, and their effigies cast down, and the victors triumphed over them with the flourishes of trumpets and the waving of banners. But while I looked, the vision was changed, and I then beheld a wide and a dreary waste, and afar off the steeples of a great city, and a tower in the midst, like the tower of Babel, and on it I could discern, written in characters of fire, "Public Opinion." While I was pondering at the same, I heard a great shout, and presently the conquerors made their appearance, coming over the desolate moor. They were going in great pride and might towards the city; but an awful burning rose, afar as it were in the darkness, and the flames stood like a tower of fire that reached unto the heavens. And I saw a dreadful hand and an arm stretched from out of the cloud, and in its hold was a besom made of the hail and the storm, and it swept the fugitives like dust; and in their place I saw the churchyard, as it were, cleared and spread around, the graves closed, and the ancient tombs, with their coats-of-arms and their effigies of stone, all as they were in the beginning. I then awoke, and behold it was a dream.

This vision perplexed me for many days, and when the news came that the king of France was beheaded by the hands of his people, I received, as it were, a token in confirmation of the vision that had been disclosed to me in my sleep, and I preached a discourse on the same, and against the French Revolution, that was thought one of the greatest and soundest sermons that I had ever delivered in my pulpit.

On the Monday following, Mr Cayenne, who had been some time before appointed a justice of the peace, came over from Wheatrig

House to the Cross-Keys, where he sent for me and divers other respectable inhabitants of the clachan, and told us that he was to have a sad business, for a warrant was out to bring before him two democratic weaver lads, on a suspicion of high treason. Scarcely were the words uttered when they were brought in, and he began to ask them how they dared to think of dividing, with their liberty and equality of principles, his and every other man's property in the country. The men answered him in a calm manner, and told him they sought no man's property, but only their own natural rights; upon which he called them traitors and reformers. They denied they were traitors, but confessed they were reformers, and said they knew not how that should be imputed to them as a fault, for that the greatest men of all times had been reformers,—“Was not,” they said, “our Lord Jesus Christ a reformer?”—“And what the devil did he make of it?” cried Mr Cayenne, bursting with passion; “Was he not crucified?”

I thought, when I heard these words, that the pillars of the earth sank beneath me, and that the roof of the house was carried away in a whirlwind. The drums of my ears crackit, blue starns danced before my sight, and I was fain to leave the house and hie me home to the manse, where I sat down in my study, like a stupified creature, awaiting what would betide. Nothing, however, was found against the weaver lads; but I never from that day could look on Mr Cayenne as a Christian, though surely he was a true government-man.

Soon after this affair, there was a pleasant re-edification of a gospel-spirit among the heritors, especially when they heard how I had handled the regicides in France; and on the following Sunday, I had the comfortable satisfaction to see many a gentleman in their pews, that had not been for years within a kirk-door. The democrats, who took a world of trouble to misrepresent the actions of the gentry, insinuated that all this was not from any new sense of grace, but in fear of their being reported as suspected persons to the king's government. But I could not think so, and considered their renewal of communion with the church as a swearing of allegiance to the King of kings, against that host of French atheists, who had torn the mortcloth

from the coffin, and made it a banner, with which they were gone forth to war against the Lamb. The whole year was, however, spent in great uneasiness, and the proclamation of the war was followed by an appalling stop in trade. We heard of nothing but failures on all hands; and among others that grieved me, was that of Mr Maitland of Glasgow, who had befriended Mrs Malcolm in the days of her affliction, and gave her son Robert his fine ship. It was a sore thing to hear of so many breakings, especially of old respected merchants like him, who had been a Lord Provost, and was far declined into the afternoon of life. He did not, however, long survive the mutation of his fortune; but bending his aged head in sorrow, sank down beneath the stroke, to rise no more.



CHAPTER XXXV.—YEAR 1794.

THE CONDITION OF THE PARISH, AS DIVIDED INTO GOVERNMENT-MEN AND JACOBINS
—I ENDEAVOUR TO PREVENT CHRISTIAN CHARITY FROM BEING FORGOTTEN IN THE
PHRASEOLOGY OF UTILITY AND PHILANTHROPY

THIS year had opened into all the leafiness of midsummer before any thing memorable happened in the parish, further than that the sad division of my people into government-men and jacobins was perfected. This calamity, for I never could consider such heartburning among neighbours as any thing less than a very heavy calamity, was assuredly occasioned by faults on both sides; but it must be confessed that the gentry did nothing to win the commonality from the errors of their way. A little more condescension on their part would not have made things worse, and might have made them better; but pride interposed, and caused them to think that any show of affability from them would be construed by the democrats into a terror of their power; while the democrats were no less to blame; for hearing how their compeers were thriving in France, and demolishing every obstacle to their ascendancy, they were crouse and really insolent, evidencing none of that temperance in

prosperity that proves the possessors worthy of their good fortune.

As for me, my duty in these circumstances was plain and simple. The Christian religion was attempted to be brought into disrepute; the rising generation were taught to gibe at its holiest ordinances; and the kirk was more frequented as a place to while away the time on a rainy Sunday, than for any insight of the admonitions and revelations in the sacred book. Knowing this, I perceived that it would be of no effect to handle much the mysteries of the faith; but as there was at the time a bruit and a sound about universal benevolence, philanthropy, utility, and all the other disguises with which an infidel philosophy appropriated to itself the charity, brotherly love, and welldoing inculcated by our holy religion, I set myself to task upon these heads, and thought it no robbery to use a little of the stratagem employed against Christ's kingdom, to promote the interests thereof in the hearts and understandings of those whose ears would have been sealed against me, had I attempted to expound higher things. Accordingly, on one day it was my practice to show what the nature of Christian charity was, comparing it to the light and warmth of the sun, that shines impartially on the just and the unjust—showing that man, without the sense of it as a duty, was as the beasts that perish, and that every feeling of his nature was intimately selfish, but that when actuated by this divine impulse, he rose out of himself, and became as a god, zealous to abate the sufferings of all things that live; and, on the next day, I demonstrated that the new benevolence which had come so much into vogue, was but another version of this Christian virtue. In like manner, I dealt with brotherly love, bringing it home to the business and bosoms of my hearers, that the Christianity of it was neither enlarged nor bettered by being baptized with the Greek name of philanthropy. With welldoing, however, I went more roundly to work. I told my people that I thought they had more sense than to secede from Christianity to become Utilitarians; for that it would be a confession of ignorance of the faith they deserted, seeing that it was the main duty inculcated by our religion to do all in morals and manners to which the newfangled doctrine of utility pretended.

These discourses, which I continued for some time, had no great effect on the men ; but being prepared in a familiar household manner, they took the fancies of the young women, which was to me an assurance that the seed I had planted would in time shoot forth ; for I reasoned with myself, that if the gudemen of the immediate generation should continue free-thinkers, their wives will take care that those of the next shall not lack that spunk of grace ; so I was cheered under that obscurity which fell upon Christianity at this time, with a vista beyond, in which I saw, as it were, the children unborn, walking on the bright green, and in the unclouded splendour of the faith.

But what with the decay of trade, and the temptation of the king's bounty, and, over all, the witlessness that was in the spirit of man at this time, the number that enlisted in the course of the year from the parish was prodigious. In one week no less than three weavers and two cotton-spinners went over to Ayr, and took the bounty for the Royal Artillery. But I could not help remarking to myself, that the people were grown so used to changes and extraordinary adventures, that the single enlistment of Thomas Wilson, at the beginning of the American war, occasioned a far greater grief and work among us, than all the swarms that went off week after week in the months of November and December of this year.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—YEAR 1795.

A RECRUITING PARTY VISITS THE TOWN—AFTER THEM, PLAYERS—THEN PREACHING QUAKERS—THE PROGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY AMONG THE WEAVERS.

THE present Ann. Dom. was ushered in with an event that I had never dreaded to see in my day, in our once sober and religious country parish. The number of lads that had gone over to Ayr to be soldiers from among the spinners and weavers of Caycnneville had been so great, that the government got note of it, and sent a recruiting party to be quartered in the town ; for the

term clachan was beginning by this time to wear out of fashion ; indeed, the place itself was outgrowing the fitness of that title. Never shall I forget the dunt that the first tap of the drum gied to my heart, as I was sitting on Hansel Monday by myself, at the parlour fireside, Mrs Balwhidder being throng with the lasses looking out a washing, and my daughter at Ayr, spending a few days with her old comrades of the boarding-school. I thought it was the enemy ; and then anon the sound of the fife came shrill to the ear, for the night was lown and peaceful. My wife and all the lasses came flying in upon me, crying all, in the name of heaven, what could it be ? by which I was obligated to put on my big-coat, and, with my hat and staff, go out to enquire. The whole town was aloof, the aged at the doors in clusters, and the bairns following the tattoo, as it was called, and at every doubling beat of the drum, shouting as if they had been in the face of their foemen.

Mr Archibald Dozendale, one of my elders, was saying to several persons around him, just as I came up, "Hech, sirs ! but the battle draws near our gates," upon which there was a heavy sigh from all that heard him ; and then they told me of the sergeant's business ; and we had a serious communing together anent the same. But while we were thus standing discoursing on the causey, Mrs Balwhidder and the servant lasses could thole no longer, but in a troop came in quest of me, to hear what was doing. In short, it was a night both of sorrow and anxiety. Mr Dozendale walked back to the manse with us, and we had a sober tumbler of toddy together ; marvelling exceedingly where these fearful portents and changes would stop, both of us being of opinion that the end of the world was drawing nearer and nearer.

Whether it was, however, that the lads belonging to the place did not like to show themselves with the enlistment cockades among their acquaintance, or that there was any other reason, I cannot take it upon me to say ; but certain it is, the recruiting party came no speed, and, in consequence, were removed about the end of March.

Another thing happened in this year, too remarkable for me to neglect to put on record, as it strangely and strikingly marked

the rapid revolutions that were going on. In the month of August, at the time of the fair, a gang of playactors came, and hired Thomas Thacklan's barn for their enactments. They were the first of that clanjamfrey who had ever been in the parish; and there was a wonderful excitement caused by the rumours concerning them. Their first performance was Douglas Tragedy and the Gentle Shepherd; and the general opinion was, that the lad who played Norval in the play, and Patie in the farce, was an English lord's son, who had run away from his parents rather than marry an old cracket lady with a great portion. But, whatever truth there might be in this notion, certain it is, the whole pack was in a state of perfect beggary; and yet, for all that, they not only in their parts, as I was told, laughed most heartily, but made others do the same; for I was constrained to let my daughter go to see them, with some of her acquaintance; and she gave me such an account of what they did, that I thought I would have liked to have gotten a keek at them myself. At the same time, I must own this was a sinful curiosity, and I stifled it to the best of my ability. Among other plays that they did, was one called Macbeth and the Witches, which the Miss Cayennes had seen performed in London, when they were there in the winter time with their father, for three months, seeing the world, after coming from the boarding-school. But it was no more like the true play of Shakspeare the poet, according to their account, than a duddy betheral, set up to fright the sparrows from the peas, is like a living gentleman. The hungry players, instead of behaving like guests at the royal banquet, were voracious on the needful feast of bread, and the strong ale, that served for wine in decanters. But the greatest sport of all was about a kail-pot, that acted the part of a caldron, and which should have sunk with thunder and lightning into the earth; however, it did quite as well, for it made its exit, as Miss Virginia said, by walking quietly off, being pulled by a string fastened to one of its feet. No scene of the play was so much applauded as this one; and the actor who did the part of King Macbeth made a most polite bow of thankfulness to the audience, for the approbation with which they had received the performance of the pot.

We had likewise, shortly after the “*omnes exeunt*” of the players, an exhibition of a different sort in the same barn. This was by two English quakers, and a quaker lady, tanners from Kendal, who had been at Ayr on some leather business, where they preached, but made no proselytes. The travellers were all three in a whisky, drawn by one of the best-ordered horses, as the hostler at the Cross-Keys told me, ever seen. They came to the inn to their dinner, and meaning to stay all night, sent round, to let it be known that they would hold a meeting in Friend Thacklan’s barn; but Thomas denied they were either kith or kin to him: this, however, was their way of speaking.

In the evening, owing to the notice, a great congregation was assembled in the barn, and I myself, along with Mr Archibald Dozendale, went there likewise, to keep the people in awe; for we feared the strangers might be jeered and insulted. The three were seated aloft on a high stage, prepared on purpose, with two mares and scaffold-deals, borrowed from Mr Trowel the mason. They sat long, and silent; but at last the spirit moved the woman, and she rose, and delivered a very sensible exposition of Christianity. I was really surprised to hear such sound doctrine; and Mr Dozendale said, justly, that it was more to the purpose than some that my younger brethren from Edinburgh endeavoured to teach. So, that those who went to laugh at the sincere simplicity of the pious quakers, were rebuked by a very edifying discourse on the moral duties of a Christian’s life.

Upon the whole, however, this, to the best of my recollection, was another unsatisfactory year. In this we were, doubtless, brought more into the world; but we had a greater variety of temptation set before us, and there was still jealousy and estrangement in the dispositions of the gentry, and the lower orders, particularly the manufacturers. I cannot say, indeed, that there was any increase of corruption among the rural portion of my people; for their vocation calling them to work apart, in the purity of the free air of heaven, they were kept uncontaminated by that seditious infection which fevered the minds of the sedentary weavers, and working like flatulence in the stomachs of the cotton-spinners, sent up into their heads a vain and diseased fume of infidel philosophy.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—YEAR 1796.

DEATH OF SECOND MRS BALWHIDDER—I LOOK OUT FOR A THIRD, AND FIX UPON
MRS NUGENT, A WIDOW—PARTICULARS OF THE COURTSHIP.

THE prosperity of fortune is like the blossoms of spring, or the golden hue of the evening cloud. It delighteth the spirit, and passeth away.

In the month of February my second wife was gathered to the Lord. She had been very ill for some time with an income in her side, which no medicine could remove. I had the best doctors in the country side to her; but their skill was of no avail, their opinions being that her ail was caused by an internal abscess, for which physic has provided no cure. Her death was to me a great sorrow; for she was a most excellent wife, industrious to a degree, and managed every thing with so brisk a hand, that nothing went wrong that she put it to. With her I had grown richer than any other minister in the presbytery; but, above all, she was the mother of my bairns, which gave her a double claim upon me.

I laid her by the side of my first love, Betty Lanshaw, my own cousin that was, and I inscribed her name upon the same headstone; but time had drained my poetical vein, and I have not yet been able to indite an epitaph on her merits and virtues, for she had an eminent share of both. Her greatest fault—the best have their faults—was an over-earnestness to gather gear; in the doing of which I thought she sometimes sacrificed the comforts of a pleasant fireside; for she was never in her element but when she was keeping the servants eident at their work. But, if by this she subtracted something from the quietude that was most consonant to my nature, she has left cause, both in bank and bond, for me and her bairns to bless her great household activity.

She was not long deposited in her place of rest till I had occasion to find her loss. All my things were kept by her in a most perjink and excellent order; but they soon fell into an amazing confusion; for, as she often said to me, I had a turn for

heedlessness; insomuch, that although my daughter Janet was grown up, and able to keep the house, I saw that it would be necessary, as soon as decency would allow, for me to take another wife. I was moved to this chiefly by foreseeing that my daughter would in time be married, and taken away from me, but more on account of the servant lasses, who grew out of all bounds, verifying the proverb, "Well kens the mouse when the cat's out of the house." Besides this, I was now far down in the vale of years, and could not expect to be long without feeling some of the penalties of old age, although I was still a hail and sound man. It therefore behoved me to look in time for a helpmate, to tend me in my approaching infirmities.

Upon this important concern I reflected, as I may say, in the watches of the night; and, considering the circumstances of my situation, I saw it would not do for me to look out for an overly young woman, nor yet would it do for one of my ways to take an elderly maiden, ladies of that sort being liable to possess strong-set particularities. I therefore resolved that my choice should lie among widows of a discreet age; and I had a glimmer in my mind of speaking to Mrs Malcolm; but when I reflected on the saintly steadiness of her character, I was satisfied it would be of no use to think of her. Accordingly, I bent my brows, and looked towards Irville, which is an abundant trone for widows and other single women; and I fixed my purpose on Mrs Nugent, the relic of a professor in the university of Glasgow, both because she was a well bred woman, without any children to plea about the interest of my own two, and likewise because she was held in great estimation by all who knew her, as a lady of a Christian principle.

It was some time in the summer, however, before I made up my mind to speak to her on the subject; but one afternoon, in the month of August, I resolved to do so, and with that intent walked leisurely over to Irville; and after calling on the Rev. Dr Dinwiddie, the minister, I stepped in, as if by chance, to Mrs Nugent's. I could see that she was a little surprised at my visit; however, she treated me with every possible civility, and her servant lass bringing in the tea-things in a most orderly manner, as punctually as the clock was striking, she invited me

to sit still, and drink my tea with her; which I did, being none displeased to get such encouragement. However, I said nothing that time, but returned to the manse, very well content with what I had observed, which made me fain to repeat my visit. So, in the course of the week, taking Janet my daughter with me, we walked over in the forenoon, and called at Mrs Nugent's first, before going to any other house; and Janet saying, as we came out to go to the minister's, that she thought Mrs Nugent an agreeable woman, I determined to knock the nail on the head without further delay.

Accordingly, I invited the minister and his wife to dine with us on the Thursday following; and before leaving the town, I made Janet, while the minister and me were handling a subject, as a sort of thing of common civility, go to Mrs Nugent, and invite her also. Dr Dinwiddie was a gleg man, of a jocose nature; and he, guessing something of what I was ettling at, was very mirthful with me; but I kept my own counsel till a meet season.

On the Thursday, the company as invited came, and nothing extraordinary was seen; but in cutting up and helping a hen, Dr Dinwiddie put one wing on Mrs Nugent's plate, and the other wing on my plate, and said, there have been greater miracles than these two wings flying together, which was a sharp joke, that caused no little merriment at the expense of Mrs Nugent and me. I, however, to show that I was none daunted, laid a leg also on her plate, and took another on my own, saying, in the words of the reverend doctor, there have been greater miracles than that these two legs should lie in the same nest, which was thought a very clever come off; and, at the same time, I gave Mrs Nugent a kindly nip on her sonsy arm, which was breaking the ice in as pleasant a way as could be. In short, before any thing passed between ourselves on the subject, we were set down for a trysted pair; and this being the case, we were married as soon as a twelvemonth and a day had passed from the death of the second Mrs Balwhidder; and neither of us have had occasion to rue the bargain. It is, however, but a piece of justice due to my second wife to say, that this was not a little owing to her good manage-

ment; for she had left such a well plenished house, that her successor said, we had nothing to do but to contribute to one another's happiness.

In this year nothing more memorable happened in the parish, saving that the cotton-mill dam burst about the time of the Lammas flood, and the waters went forth like a deluge of destruction, carrying off much victual, and causing a vast of damage to the mills that are lower down the stream. It was just a prodigy to see how calmly Mr Cayenne acted on that occasion; for, being at other times as crabbed as a wud terrier, folk were afraid to tell him, till he came out himself in the morning and saw the devastation; at the sight of which he gave only a shrill whistle, and began to laugh at the idea of the men fearing to take him the news, as if he had not fortune and philosophy enough, as he called it, to withstand much greater misfortunes.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—YEAR 1797.

MR HENRY MELCOMB COMES TO THE PARISH TO SEE HIS UNCLE, MR CAYENNE—FROM SOME JOCLAR BEHAVIOUR ON HIS PART, MEG GAFFAW FALLS IN LOVE WITH HIM—THE SAD RESULT OF THE ADVENTURE WHEN HE IS MARRIED.

WHEN I have seen in my walks the irrational creatures of God, the birds and the beasts, governed by a kindly instinct in attendance on their young, often has it come into my head that love and charity, far more than reason or justice, formed the tie that holds the world, with all its jarring wants and woes, in social dependence and obligation together; and, in this year, a strong verification of the soundness of this notion was exemplified in the conduct of the poor haverel lassie Meg Gaffaw, whose naturalty on the occasion of her mother's death I have related at length in this chronicle.

In the course of the summer, Mr Henry Melcomb, who was a nephew to Mr Cayenne, came down from England to see his uncle. He had just completed his education at the college of

Christ Church, in Oxford, and was the most perfect young gentleman that had ever been seen in this part of the country.

In his appearance he was a very paragon, with a fine manly countenance, frank-hearted, blithe, and, in many points of character, very like my old friend the Lord Eaglesham, who was shot. Indeed, in some respects, he was even above his lordship; for he had a great turn at ready wit, and could joke and banter in a most agreeable manner. He came very often to the manse to see me, and took great pleasure in my company, and really used a freedom that was so droll, I could scarcely keep my composure and decorum with him. Among others that shared in his attention, was daft Meg Gaffaw, whom he had forgathered with one day in coming to see me; and after conversing with her for some time, he handed her, as she told me herself, over the kirkstile like a lady of high degree, and came with her to the manse door linking by the arm.

From the ill-timed daffin of that hour, poor Meg fell deep in love with Mr Melcomb; and it was just a playacting to see the arts and antics she put in practice to win his attention. In her garb, she had never any sense of a proper propriety, but went about the country asking for shapings of silks and satins, with which she patched her duds, calling them by the divers names of robes and negligées. All hitherto, however, had been moderation, compared to the daffadile of vanity which she was now seen, when she had searched, as she said, to the bottom of her coffer. I cannot take it upon me to describe her; but she kythed in such a variety of cuffs and ruffles, feathers, old gumflowers, painted paper knots, ribbons, and furs, and laces, and went about gecking and simpering with an old fan in her hand, that it was not in the power of nature to look at her with sobriety.

Her first appearance in this masquerading was at the kirk on the Sunday following her adventure with Mr Melcomb, and it was with a sore difficulty that I could keep my eyes off her, even in prayer; and when the kirk skailed, she walked before him, spreading all her grandeur to catch his eye, in such a manner as had not been seen or heard of since the prank that Lady Macadam played Miss Betty Wudrife.

Any other but Mr Melcomb would have been provoked by the

fool's folly; but he humoured her wit, and, to the amazement of the whole people, presented her his hand, and allemanded her along in a manner that should not have been seen in any street out of a king's court, and far less on the Lord's day. But, alas! this sport did not last long. Mr Melcomb had come from England to be married to his cousin, Miss Virginia Cayenne, and poor daft Meg never heard of it till the banns for their purpose of marriage was read out by Mr Lorimore on the Sabbath after. The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when the simple and innocent natural gave a loud shriek, that terrified the whole congregation, and ran out of the kirk demented. There was no more finery for poor Meg; but she went and sat opposite to the windows of Mr Cayenne's house, where Mr Melcomb was, with clasped hands and beseeching eyes, like a monumental statue in alabaster, and no entreaty could drive her away. Mr Melcomb sent her money, and the bride many a fine thing; but Meg flung them from her, and clasped her hands again, and still sat. Mr Cayenne would have let loose the house-dog on her, but was not permitted.

In the evening it began to rain, and they thought that and the coming darkness would drive her away; but when the servants looked out before barring the doors, there she was in the same posture. I was to perform the marriage ceremony at seven o'clock in the morning, for the young pair were to go that night to Edinburgh; and when I went, there was Meg sitting looking at the windows with her hands clasped. When she saw me she gave a shrill cry, and took me by the hand, and wised me to go back, crying out in a heart-breaking voice, "O, Sir! No yet—no yet! He'll maybe draw back, and think of a far truer bride." I was wae for her and very angry with the servants for laughing at the fond folly of the ill-less thing.

When the marriage was over, and the carriage at the door, the bridegroom handed in the bride. Poor Meg saw this, and jumping up from where she sat, was at his side like a spirit, as he was stepping in, and, taking him by the hand, she looked in his face so piteously, that every heart was sorrowful, for she could say nothing. When he pulled away his hand, and the door was shut, she stood as if she had been charmed to the spot, and saw

the chaise drive away. All that were about the door then spoke to her, but she heard us not. At last she gave a deep sigh, and the water coming into her eye, she said, "The worm—the worm is my bonny bridegroom, and Jenny with the many-feet my bridal maid. The mill-dam water's the wine o' the wedding, and the clay and the clod shall be my bedding. A lang night is meet for a bridal, but none shall be langer than mine." In saying which words, she fled from among us, with heels like the wind. The servants pursued; but long before they could stop her, she was past redemption in the deepest plumb of the cotton-mill dam.

Few deaths had for many a day happened in the parish, to cause so much sorrow as that of this poor silly creature. She was a sort of household familiar among us, and there was much like the inner side of wisdom in the pattern of her sayings, many of which are still preserved as proverbs.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—YEAR 1798.

A DEARTH—MR CAYENNE TAKES MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EVIL—HE RECEIVES KINDLY SOME IRISH REFUGEES—HIS DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE.

THIS was one of the heaviest years in the whole course of my ministry. The spring was slow of coming, and cold and wet when it did come; the dubs were full, the roads foul, and the ground that should have been dry at the seed-time, was as claggy as clay, and clung to the harrow. The labour of man and beast was thereby augmented; and all nature being in a state of sluggish indisposition, it was evident to every eye of experience that there would be a great disappointment to the hopes of the husbandman.

Foreseeing this, I gathered the opinion of all the most sagacious of my parishioners, and consulted with them for a provision against the evil day, and we spoke to Mr Cayenne on the subject, for he had a talent by common in matters of mercantile management. It was amazing, considering his ho-

temper, with what patience he heard the grounds of our apprehension, and how he questioned and sifted the experience of the old farmers, till he was thoroughly convinced that all similar seed-times were ever followed by a short crop. He then said, that he would prove himself a better friend to the parish than he was thought. Accordingly, as he afterwards told me himself, he wrote off that very night to his correspondents in America, to buy for his account all the wheat and flour they could get, and ship it to arrive early in the fall; and he bought up likewise in countries round the Baltic great store of victual, and brought in two cargoes to Irville on purpose for the parish, against the time of need, making for the occasion a garnel of one of the warehouses of the cotton-mill.

The event came to pass as had been foretold: the harvest fell short, and Mr Cayenne's cargoes from America and the Baltic came home in due season, by which he made a terrible power of money, clearing thousands on thousands by post after post—making more profit, as he said himself, in the course of one month, he believed, than ever was made by any individual within the kingdom of Scotland in the course of a year.—He said, however, that he might have made more if he had bought up the corn at home; but being convinced by us that there would be a scarcity, he thought it his duty as an honest man to draw from the stores and granaries of foreign countries, by which he was sure he would serve his country, and be abundantly rewarded. In short, we all reckoned him another Joseph when he opened his garnels at the cotton-mill, and after distributing a liberal portion to the poor and needy, selling the remainder at an easy rate to the generality of the people. Some of the neighbouring parishes, however, were angry that he would not serve them likewise, and called him a wicked and extortionate forestaller; but he made it plain to the meanest capacity, that if he did not circumscribe his dispensation to our own bounds it would be as nothing. So that, although he brought a wonderful prosperity in by the cotton-mill, and a plenteous supply of corn in a time of famine, doing more in these things for the people than all the other heritors had done from the beginning of time, he was much reviled; even his bounty

was little esteemed by my people, because he took a moderate profit on what he sold to them. Perhaps, however, these prejudices might be partly owing to their dislike of his hasty temper, at least I am willing to think so; for it would grieve me if they were really ungrateful for a benefit that made the pressure of the time lie but lightly on them.

The alarm of the Irish rebellion in this year was likewise another source of affliction to us; for many of the gentry coming over in great straits, especially ladies and their children, and some of them in the hurry of their flight having but little ready money, were very ill off. Some four or five families came to the Cross-Keys in this situation, and the conduct of Mr Cayenne to them was most exemplary. He remembered his own haste with his family from Virginia, when the Americans rebelled; and immediately on hearing of these Irish refugees, he waited on them with his wife and daughter, supplied them with money, invited them to his house, made ploys to keep up their spirits, while the other gentry stood back till they knew something of the strangers.

Among these destitute ladies was a Mrs Desmond and her two daughters, a woman of a most august presence, being indeed more like one ordained to reign over a kingdom, than for household purposes. The Miss Desmonds were only entering their teens, but they also had no ordinary stamp upon them. What made this party the more particular, was on account of Mr Desmond, who was supposed to be a united man with the rebels, and it was known his son was deep in their plots; yet although this was all told to Mr Cayenne, by some of the other Irish ladies who were of the loyal connexion, it made no difference with him, but, on the contrary, he acted as if he thought the Desmonds the most of all the refugees entitled to his hospitable civilities. This was a wonderment to our strait-laced narrow lairds, as there was not a man of such strict government principles in the whole country side as Mr Cayenne: but he said he carried his political principles only to the camp and the council. "To the hospital and the prison," said he, "I take those of a man"—which was almost a Christian doctrine, and from that declaration Mr Cayenne and me began again to draw a little

more cordially together; although he had still a very imperfect sense of religion, which I attributed to his being born in America, where even as yet, I am told, they have but a scanty sprinkling of grace.

But before concluding this year, I should tell the upshot of the visitation of the Irish, although it did not take place until some time after the peace with France.

In the putting down of the rebels Mr Desmond and his son made their escape to Paris, where they stayed till the treaty was signed, by which, for several years after the return to Ireland of the grand lady and her daughters, as Mrs Desmond was called by our commonality, we heard nothing of them. The other refugees repaid Mr Cayenne his money with thankfulness, and, on their restoration to their homes, could not sufficiently express their sense of his kindness. But the silence and seeming ingratitude of the Desmonds vexed him; and he could not abide to hear the Irish rebellion mentioned without flying into a passion against the rebels, which every body knew was owing to the ill return he had received from that family. However, one afternoon, just about half an hour before his wonted dinner hour, a grand equipage, with four horses and outriders, stopped at his door, and who was in it but Mrs Desmond and an elderly man, and a young gentleman with an aspect like a lord. It was her husband and son. They had come from Ireland in all their state on purpose to repay with interest the money Mr Cayenne had counted so long lost, and to express in person the perpetual obligation which he had conferred upon the Desmond family, in all time coming. The lady then told him, that she had been so straitened in helping the poor ladies, that it was not in her power to make repayment till Desmond, as she called her husband, came home; and not choosing to assign the true reason, lest it might cause trouble, she rather submitted to be suspected of ingratitude than do an improper thing.

Mr Cayenne was transported with this unexpected return, and a friendship grew up between the families, which was afterwards cemented into relationship by the marriage of the young Desmond with Miss Caroline Cayenne. Some in the parish objected to this match, Mrs Desmond being a papist; but as

Miss Caroline had received an episcopalian education, I thought it of no consequence, and married them after their family chaplain from Ireland, as a young couple both by beauty and fortune well matched, and deserving of all conjugal felicity.

CHAPTER XL.—YEAR 1799.

MY DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE—HER LARGE PORTION—MRS MALCOLM'S DEATH.

THERE are but two things to make me remember this year; the first was the marriage of my daughter Janet with the reverend Dr Kittleword of Swappington, a match in every way commendable; and on the advice of the third Mrs Balwhidder, I settled a thousand pounds down, and promised five hundred more at my own death if I died before my spouse, and a thousand at her death if she survived me; which was the greatest portion ever minister's daughter had in our country side. In this year likewise, I advanced fifteen hundred pounds for my son in a concern in Glasgow,—all was the gathering of that indefatigable engine of industry the second Mrs Balwhidder, whose talents her successor said were a wonder, when she considered the circumstances in which I had been left at her death, and made out of a narrow stipend.

The other memorable was the death of Mrs Malcolm. If ever there was a saint on this earth, she was surely one. She had been for some time bedfast, having all her days from the date of her widowhood been a tender woman; but no change made any alteration on the Christian contentment of her mind. She bore adversity with an honest pride; she toiled in the day of penury and affliction with thankfulness for her earnings, although ever so little. She bent her head to the Lord in resignation when her first-born fell in battle; nor was she puffed up with vanity when her daughters were married, as it was said, so far above their degree, though they showed it was but into their proper sphere by their demeanour after. She lived to see her

second son, the captain, rise into affluence, married, and with a thriving young family; and she had the very great satisfaction, on the last day she was able to go to church, to see her youngest son the clergyman standing in my pulpit, a doctor of divinity, and the placed minister of a richer parish than mine. Well indeed might she have said on that day, "Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

For some time it had been manifest to all who saw her, that her latter end was drawing nigh; and therefore, as I had kept up a correspondence with her daughters, Mrs Macadam and Mrs Howard, I wrote them a particular account of her case, which brought them to the clachan. They both came in their own carriages; for Colonel Macadam was now a general, and had succeeded to a great property by an English uncle, his mother's brother; and Captain Howard, by the death of his father, was also a man, as it was said, with a lord's living. Robert Malcolm, her son the captain, was in the West Indies at the time; but his wife came on the first summons, as did William the minister.

They all arrived about four o'clock in the afternoon, and at seven a message came for me and Mrs Balwhidder to go over to them, which we did, and found the strangers seated by the heavenly patient's bedside. On my entering, she turned her eyes towards me, and said, "Bear witness, sir, that I die thankful for an extraordinary portion of temporal mercies. The heart of my youth was withered like the leaf that is seared with the lightning; but in my children I have received a great indemnification for the sorrows of that trial." She then requested me to pray, saying, "No; let it be a thanksgiving. My term is out, and I have nothing more to hope or fear from the good or evil of this world. But I have had much to make me grateful; therefore, sir, return thanks for the time I have been spared, for the goodness granted so long unto me, and the gentle hand with which the way from this world is smoothed for my passing."

There was something so sweet and consolatory in the way she said this, that although it moved all present to tears, they were tears without the wonted bitterness of grief. Accordingly, I knelt down and did as she had required, and there was a great

stillness while I prayed. At the conclusion we looked to the bed, but the spirit had, in the mean time, departed, and there was nothing remaining but the clay tenement.

It was expected by the parish, considering the vast affluence of the daughters, that there would have been a grand funeral, and Mrs Howard thought it was necessary; but her sister, who had from her youth upward a superior discernment of propriety, said, "No; as my mother has lived, so shall be her end." Accordingly, every body of any respect in the clachan was invited to the funeral; but none of the gentry, saving only such as had been numbered among the acquaintance of the deceased. But Mr Cayenne came unbidden, saying to me, that although he did not know Mrs Malcolm personally, he had often heard she was an amiable woman, and therefore he thought it a proper compliment to her family, who were out of the parish, to show in what respect she was held among us; for he was a man that would take his own way, and do what he thought was right, heedless alike of blame or approbation.

If, however, the funeral was plain, though respectable, the ladies distributed a liberal sum among the poor families; but before they went away, a silent token of their mother's virtue came to light, which was at once a source of sorrow and pleasure. Mrs Malcolm was first well provided by the Macadams, afterwards the Howards settled on her an equal annuity, by which she spent her latter days in great comfort. Many a year before, she had repaid Provost Maitland the money he sent her in the day of her utmost distress; and at this period he was long dead, having died of a broken heart at the time of his failure. From that time his widow and her daughters had been in very straitened circumstances; but unknown to all but herself, and HIM from whom nothing is hid, Mrs Malcolm from time to time had sent them, in a blank letter, an occasional note to the young ladies to buy a gown. After her death, a bank-bill for a sum of money, her own savings, was found in her scrutoire, with a note of her own writing pinned to the same, stating, that the amount being more than she had needed for herself, belonged of right to those who had so generously provided for her; but as they were not in want of such a trifle, it would be a token of

respect to her memory, if they would give the bill to Mrs Maitland and her daughters, which was done with the most glad alacrity; and, in the doing of it, the private kindness was brought to light.

Thus ended the history of Mrs Malcolm, as connected with our Parish Annals. Her house was sold, and is the same now inhabited by the millwright, Mr Periffery; and a neat house it still is, for the possessor is an Englishman, and the English have an uncommon taste for snod houses and trim gardens; but at the time it was built, there was not a better in the town, though it's now but of the second class. Yearly we hear both from Mrs Macadam and her sister, with a five-pound note from each to the poor of the parish, as a token of their remembrance; but they are far off, and, were any thing ailing me, I suppose the gift will not be continued. As for Captain Malcolm, he has proved, in many ways, a friend to such of our young men as have gone to sea. He has now left it off himself, and settled at London, where he latterly sailed from, and, I understand, is in a great way as a shipowner. These things I have thought it fitting to record, and will now resume my historical narration.

CHAPTER XLJ.—YEAR 1800.

RETURN OF AN INCLINATION TOWARDS POLITICAL TRANQUILLITY—DEATH OF THE SCHOOLMISTRESS.

THE same quietude and regularity that marked the progress of the last year, continued throughout the whole of this. We sowed and reaped in tranquillity, though the sough of distant war came heavily from a distance. The cotton-mill did well for the company, and there was a sobriety in the minds of the spinners and weavers, which showed that the crisis of their political distemperature was over;—there was something more of the old prudence in men's reflections; and it was plain to me that the elements of reconciliation were coming together throughout the world. The conflagration of the French Revolution was indeed

not extinguished, but it was evidently burning out; and their old reverence for the Grand Monarque was beginning to revive among them, though they only called him a consul. Upon the king's fast I preached on this subject; and when the peace was concluded, I got great credit for my foresight, but there was no merit in't. I had only lived longer than the most of those around me, and had been all my days a close observer of the signs of the times; so that what was lightly called prophecy and prediction, were but a probability that experience had taught me to discern.

In the affairs of the parish, the most remarkable generality (for we had no particular catastrophe) was a great death of old people in the spring. Among others, Miss Sabrina, the school-mistress, paid the debt of nature, but we could now better spare her than we did her predecessor; for at Cayenneville there was a broken manufacturer's wife, an excellent teacher, and a genteel and modernized woman, who took the better order of children; and Miss Sabrina having been long frail, (for she was never stout,) a decent and discreet carlin, Mrs M'Caffie, the widow of a custom-house officer, that was a native of the parish, set up another for plainer work. Her opposition Miss Sabrina did not mind, but she was sorely displeased at the interloping of Mrs Pirn at Cayenneville, and some said it helped to kill her—of that, however, I am not so certain; for Dr Tanzey had told me in the winter, that he thought the sharp winds in March would blow out her candle, as it was burnt to the snuff; accordingly, she took her departure from this life, on the twenty-fifth day of that month, after there had, for some days prior, been a most cold and piercing east wind.

Miss Sabrina, who was always an oddity and aping grandeur, it was found, had made a will, leaving her gatherings to her favourites, with all regular formality. To one she bequeathed a gown, to another this, and a third that, and to me a pair of black silk stockings. I was amazed when I heard this; but judge what I felt, when a pair of old marrowless stockings, darned in the heel, and not whole enough in the legs to make a pair of mittens to Mrs Balwhidder, were delivered to me by her executor, Mr Caption, the lawyer. Saving, however, this kind of flummery, Miss Sabrina was a harmless creature, and

could quote poetry in discourse more glibly than texts of Scripture—her father having spared no pains on her mind: as for her body, it could not be mended; but that was not her fault.

After her death, the session held a consultation, and we agreed to give the same salary that Miss Sabrina enjoyed to Mrs Mac-Caffie, which angered Mr Cayenne, who thought it should have been given to the head mistress; and it made him give Mrs Pirn, out of his own pocket, double the sum. But we considered that the parish funds were for the poor of the parish, and therefore it was our duty to provide for the instruction of the poor children. Saving, therefore, those few notations, I have nothing further to say concerning the topics and progress of this Ann. Dom.

CHAPTER XLII.—YEAR 1801.

AN ACCOUNT OF COLIN MAVIS, WHO BECOMES A POET.

It is often to me very curious food for meditation, that as the parish increased in population, there should have been less cause for matter to record. Things that in former days would have occasioned great discourse and cogitation, are forgotten with the day in which they happen; and there is no longer that searching into personalities which was so much in vogue during the first epoch of my ministry, which I reckon the period before the American war; nor has there been any such germinal changes among us, as those which took place in the second epoch, counting backward from the building of the cotton-mill that gave rise to the town of Cayenneville. But still we were not, even at this era, of which this Ann. Dom. is the beginning, without occasional personality, or an event that deserved to be called a germinal.

Some years before, I had noted among the callans at Mr Lorimore's school, a long soople laddie, who, like all bairns that grow fast and tall, had but little smeddum. He could not be

called a dolt, for he was observant and thoughtful, and giving to asking sagacious questions; but there was a sleepiness about him, especially in the kirk, and he gave, as the master said, but little application to his lessons, so that folk thought he would turn out a sort of gaunt-at-the door, more mindful of meat than work. He was, however, a good-natured lad; and, when I was taking my solitary walks of meditation, I sometimes fell in with him, sitting alone on the brae by the water-side, and sometimes lying on the grass, with his hands under his head, on the sunny green knolls where Mr Cylindar, the English engineer belonging to the cotton-work, has built the bonny house that he calls Diryhill Cottage. This was when Colin Mavis was a laddie at the school, and when I spoke to him, I was surprised at the discretion of his answers; so that gradually I began to think and say, that there was more about Colin than the neighbours knew. Nothing, however, for many a day, came out to his advantage; so that his mother, who was by this time a widow woman, did not well know what to do with him, and folk pitied her heavy handful of such a droud.

By-and-by, however, it happened that one of the young clerks at the cotton-mill shattered his right-hand thumb by a gun bursting; and, being no longer able to write, was sent into the army to be an ensign, which caused a vacancy in the office; and, through the help of Mr Cayenne, I got Colin Mavis into the place, where, to the surprise of every body, he proved a wonderful eident and active lad, and, from less to more, has come at the head of all the clerks, and deep in the confidentials of his employers. But although this was a great satisfaction to me, and to the widow woman his mother, it somehow was not so much so to the rest of the parish, who seemed, as it were, angry that poor Colin had not proved himself such a dolt as they had expected and foretold.

Among other ways that Colin had of spending his leisure, was that of playing music on an instrument, in which it was said he made a wonderful proficiency; but being long and thin, and of a delicate habit of body, he was obligated to refrain from this recreation; so he betook himself to books, and from reading he began to try writing; but, as this was done in a corner

nobody jealous of what he was about, till one evening in this year he came to the manse, and asked a word in private with me. I thought that perhaps he had fallen in with a lass, and was come to consult me anent matrimony; but when we were by ourselves, in my study, he took out of his pocket a number of the Scots Magazine, and said, "Sir, you have been long pleased to notice me more than any other body, and when I got this, I could not refrain from bringing it, to let you see't. Ye maun ken, sir, that I have been long in secret given to trying my hand at rhyme; and, wishing to ascertain what others thought of my power in that way, I sent by the post twa three verses to the Scots Magazine, and they have not only inserted them, but placed them in the body of the book, in such a way that I kenna what to think." So I looked at the Magazine, and read his verses, which were certainly very well made verses for one who had no regular education. But I said to him, as the Greenock magistrates said to John Wilson, the author of Clyde, when they stipulated with him to give up the art, that poem-making was a profane and unprofitable trade, and he would do well to turn his talent to something of more solidity, which he promised to do; but he has since put out a book, whereby he has angered all those that had foretold he would be a do-nae-gude. Thus has our parish walked sidy for sidy with all the national improvements, having an author of its own, and getting a literary character in the ancient and famous republic of letters.

CHAPTER XLIII.—YEAR 1802.

THE POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE WORLD FELT IN THE PRIVATE CONCERNS OF INDIVIDUALS—MR CAYENNE COMES TO ASK MY ADVICE, AND ACTS ACCORDING TO IT.

"EXPERIENCE teaches fools," was the first moral apothegm that I wrote in small text, when learning to write at the school, and I have ever since thought it was a very sensible reflection.

For assuredly, as year after year has flown away on the swift wings of time, I have found my experience mellowing, and my discernment improving; by which I have, in the afternoon of life, been enabled to foresee what kings and nations would do, by the symptoms manifested within the bounds of the society around me. Therefore, at the beginning of the spring in this Ann. Dom., I had misgivings at the heart, a fluttering in my thoughts, and altogether a strange uneasiness as to the stability of the peace and harmony that was supposed to be founded upon a steadfast foundation between us and the French people. What my fears principally took their rise from, was a sort of compliancy, on the part of those in power and authority, to cultivate the old relations and parts between them and the commonalty. It did not appear to me that this proceeded from any known or decided event, for I read the papers at this period daily; but from some general dread and fear, that was begotten, like a vapour out of the fermentation of all sorts of opinions; most people of any sagacity thinking that the state of things in France being so much of an antic, poetical, and playactor-like guise, that it would never obtain that respect, far less that reverence from the world, which is necessary to the maintenance of all beneficial government. The consequence of this was a great distrust between man and man, and an aching restlessness among those who had their bread to bake in the world; persons possessing the power to provide for their kindred, forcing them, as it were, down the throats of those who were dependent on them in business, a bitter morsel.

But the pith of these remarks chiefly applies to the manufacturing concerns of the new town of Cayenneville; for in the clachan we lived in the lea of the dike, and were more taken up with our own natural rural affairs, and the markets for victual, than the craft of merchandize. The only man interested in business, who walked in a steady manner at his old pace, though he sometimes was seen, being of a spunkie temper, grinding the teeth of vexation, was Mr Cayenne himself.

One day, however, he came to me at the manse. "Doctor," says he, for so he always called me, "I want your advice. I never choose to trouble others with my private affairs; but there

are times when the word of an honest man may do good. I need not tell you, that when I declared myself a Royalist in America, it was at a considerable sacrifice. I have, however, nothing to complain of against government on that score; but I think it damn'd hard that those personal connexions, whose interests I preserved to the detriment of my own, should in my old age make such an ungrateful return. By the steps I took prior to quitting America, I saved the property of a great mercantile concern in London. In return for that, they took a share with me, and for me, in the cotton-mill; and being here on the spot, as manager, I have both made and saved them money. I have, no doubt, bettered my own fortune in the mean time. Would you believe it, doctor, they have written a letter to me, saying that they wish to provide for a relation, and requiring me to give up to him a portion of my share in the concern—a pretty sort of providing this, at another man's expense! But I'll be damn'd if I do any such thing! If they want to provide for their friend, let them do so from themselves, and not at my cost—What is your opinion?"

This appeared to me a very weighty concern, and, not being versed in mercantile dealing, I did not well know what to say; but I reflected for some time, and then I replied, "As far, Mr Cayenne, as my observation has gone in this world, I think that the griffs and the gaffs nearly balance one another; and when they do not, there is a moral defect on the failing side. If a man long gives his labour to his employer, and is paid for that labour, it might be said that both are equal; but I say no. For it's in human nature to be prompt to change; and the employer, having always more in his power than his servant or agent, it seems to me a clear case, that in the course of a number of years, the master of the old servant is the obligated of the two; and therefore I say, in the first place, in your case there is no tie or claim, by which you may, in a moral sense, be called upon to submit to the dictates of your London correspondents; but there is a reason, in the nature of the thing and case, by which you may ask a favour from them—So, the advice I would give you would be this: write an answer to their letter, and tell them that you have no objection to the taking in of a new partner,

but you think it would be proper to revise all the copartnery, especially as you have, considering the manner in which you have advanced the business, been of opinion, that your share should be considerably enlarged."

I thought Mr Cayenne would have louped out of his skin with mirth at this notion; and, being a prompt man, he sat down at my scrutoire, and answered the letter which gave him so much uneasiness. No notice was taken of it for some time; but in the course of a month he was informed, that it was not considered expedient at that time to make any change in the company. I thought the old man was gone by himself when he got this letter. He came over instantly in his chariot, from the cotton-mill office to the manse, and swore an oath, by some dreadful name, that I was a Solomon. However, I only mention this to show how experience had instructed me, and as a sample of that sinister provisioning of friends that was going on in the world at this time—all owing, as I do verily believe, to the uncertain state of governments and national affairs.

Besides these generalities, I observed another thing working to effect—mankind read more, and the spirit of reflection and reasoning was more awake than at any time within my remembrance. Not only was there a handsome bookseller's shop in Cayenneville, with a London newspaper daily, but magazines, and reviews, and other new publications.

Till this year, when a chaise was wanted we had to send to Irville; but Mr Toddy of the Cross-Keys being in at Glasgow, he bought an excellent one at the second-hand, a portion of the effects of a broken merchant, by which, from that period, we had one of our own, and it proved a great convenience; for I, who never but twice in my life before hired that kind of commodity, had it thrice during the summer, for a bit jaunt with Mrs Balwhidder to divers places and curiosities in the county that I had not seen before, by which our ideas were greatly enlarged; indeed, I have always had a partiality for travelling, as one of the best means of opening the faculty of the mind, and giving clear and correct notions of men and things.

CHAPTER XLIV.—YEAR 1803.

FEAR OF AN INVASION—RAISING OF VOLUNTEERS IN THE PARISH—THE YOUNG LADIES EMBROIDER A STAND OF COLOURS FOR THE REGIMENT.

DURING the tempestuous times that ensued, from the death of the King of France by the hands of the executioner in 1793, there had been a political schism among my people that often made me very uneasy. The folk belonging to the cotton-mill, and the muslin-weavers in Cayenneville, were afflicted with the itch of jacobinism, but those of the village were stanch and true to king and country; and some of the heritors were desirous to make volunteers of the young men of them, in case of any thing like the French anarchy and confusion rising on the side of the manufacturers. I, however, set myself, at that time, against this, for I foresaw that the French business was but a fever which would soon pass off; but no man could tell the consequence of putting arms in the hands of neighbour against neighbour, though it was but in the way of policy.

But when Bonaparte gathered his host forment the English coast, and the government at London were in terror of their lives for an invasion, all in the country saw that there was danger, and I was not backward in sounding the trumpet to battle. For a time, however, there was a diffidence among us somewhere. The gentry had a distrust of the manufacturers; and the farming lads were wud with impatience, that those who should be their leaders would not come forth. I, knowing this, prepared a sermon suitable to the occasion, giving out from the pulpit myself, the Sabbath before preaching it, that it was my intent, on the next Lord's day, to deliver a religious and political exhortation on the present posture of public affairs. This drew a vast congregation of all ranks.

I trow that the stoor had no peace in the stuffing of the pulpit in that day; and the effect was very great and speedy: for next morning the weavers and cotton-mill folk held a meeting, and they, being skilled in the ways of committees and associating together, had certain resolutions prepared, by which a select few

was appointed to take an enrolment of all willing in the parish to serve as volunteers in defence of their king and country, and to concert with certain gentlemen named therein, about the formation of a corps, of which, it was an understood thing, the said gentlemen were to be the officers. The whole of this business was managed with the height of discretion; and the weavers, and spinners, and farming lads, vied with one another who should be first on the list. But that which the most surprised me, was the wonderful sagacity of the committee in naming the gentlemen that should be the officers. I could not have made a better choice myself; for they were the best built, the best bred, and the best natured, in the parish. In short, when I saw the bravery that was in my people, and the spirit of wisdom by which it was directed, I said in my heart, the Lord of Hosts is with us, and the adversary shall not prevail.

The number of valiant men which at that time placed themselves around the banners of their country was so great, that the government would not accept of all who offered; so, like as in other parishes, we were obligated to make a selection, which was likewise done in a most judicious manner, all men above a certain age being reserved for the defence of the parish, in the day when the young might be called to England to fight the enemy.

When the corps was formed, and the officers named, they made me their chaplain, and Dr Marigold their doctor. He was a little man with a big belly, and was as crouse as a bantam cock; but it was not thought he could do so well in field exercises, on which account he was made the doctor, although he had no repute in that capacity in comparison with Dr Tanzey, who was not, however, liked, being a stiff-mannered man, with a sharp temper.

All things having come to a proper head, the young ladies of the parish resolved to present the corps with a stand of colours, which they embroidered themselves, and a day was fixed for the presentation of the same. Never was such a day seen in Dalmailing. The sun shone brightly on that scene of bravery and grandeur, and far and near the country folk came flocking in; and we had the regimental band of music hired from the soldiers that were in Ayr barracks. The very first sound o't made the

hair on my old grey head to prick up, and my blood to rise and glow as if youth was coming again into my veins.

Sir Hugh Montgomerie was the commandant ; and he came in all the glory of war, on his best horse, and marched at the head of the men to the green-head. The doctor and me were the rearguard : not being able, on account of my age and his fatness, to walk so fast as the quick-step of the corps. On the field, we took our place in front, near Sir Hugh and the ladies with the colours ; and after some salutations, according to the fashion of the army, Sir Hugh made a speech to the men, and then Miss Maria Montgomerie came forward, with her sister Miss Eliza, and the other ladies, and the banners were unfurled, all glittering with gold, and the king's arms in needlework. Miss Maria then made a speech, which she had got by heart ; but she was so agitated that it was said she forgot the best part of it : however, it was very well considering. When this was done, I then stepped forward, and laying my hat on the ground, every man and boy taking off theirs, I said a prayer, which I had conned most carefully, and which I thought the most suitable I could devise, in unison with Christian principles, which are averse to the shedding of blood ; and I particularly dwelt upon some of the specialities of our situation.

When I had concluded, the volunteers gave three great shouts, and the multitude answered them to the same tune, and all the instruments of music sounded, making such a bruit as could not be surpassed for grandeur—a long, and very circumstantial account of all which, may be read in the newspapers of that time.

The volunteers, at the word of command, then showed us the way they were to fight with the French, in the doing of which a sad disaster happened ; for when they were charging bayonets, they came towards us like a flood, and all the spectators ran ; and I ran, and the doctor ran ; but being laden with his belly, he could not run fast enough, so he lay down, and being just before me at the time, I tumbled over him, and such a shout of laughter shook the field as was never heard.

When the fatigues of the day were at an end, we marched to the cotton-mill, where, in one of the warehouses, a vast table

was spread, and a dinner, prepared at Mr Cayenne's own expense, sent in from the Cross-Keys, and the whole corps, with many of the gentry of the neighbourhood, dined with great jollity, the band of music playing beautiful airs all the time. At night there was a universal dance, gentle and simple mingled together. All which made it plain to me, that the Lord, by this unison of spirit, had decreed our national preservation; but I kept this in my own breast, lest it might have the effect to relax the vigilance of the kingdom. And I should note that Colin Mavis, the poetical lad, of whom I have spoken in another part, made a song for this occasion that was very mightily thought of, having in it a nerve of valiant genius, that kindled the very souls of those that heard it.

CHAPTER XLV.—YEAR 1804.

THE SESSION AGREES THAT CHURCH CENSURES SHALL BE COMMUTED WITH FINES—OUR PARISH HAS AN OPPORTUNITY OF SEEING A TURTLE, WHICH IS SENT TO MR CAYENNE—SOME FEARS OF POPERY—ALSO ABOUT A PREACHER OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION—REPORT OF A FRENCH SHIP APPEARING IN THE WEST, WHICH SETS THE VOLUNTEERS ASTIR.

IN conformity with the altered fashions of the age, in this year the session came to an understanding with me, that we should not inflict the common church censures for such as made themselves liable thereto; but we did not formally promulge our resolution as to this, wishing as long as possible to keep the deterring rod over the heads of the young and thoughtless. Our motive, on the one hand, was the disregard of the manufacturers in Cayenneville, who were, without the breach of truth, an irreligious people; and, on the other, a desire to preserve the ancient and wholesome admonitory and censorian jurisdiction of the minister and elders. We therefore laid it down as a rule to ourselves, that, in the case of transgressions on the part of the inhabitants of the new district of Cayenneville, we should subject them rigorously to a fine; but that for the farming-lads,

we would put it in their option to pay the fine, or stand in the kirk.

We conformed also in another matter to the times, by consenting to baptize occasionally in private houses. Hitherto it had been a strict rule with me only to baptize from the pulpit. Other parishes, however, had long been in the practice of this relaxation of ancient discipline.

But all this on my part, was not done without compunction of spirit; for I was of opinion, that the principle of Presbyterian integrity should have been maintained to the uttermost. Seeing, however, the elders set on an alteration, I distrusted my own judgment, and yielded myself to the considerations that weighed with them; for they were true men, and of a godly honesty, and took the part of the poor in all contentions with the heritors, often to the hazard and damage of their own temporal welfare.

I have now to note a curious thing, not on account of its importance, but to show to what lengths a correspondence had been opened in the parish with the farthest parts of the earth. Mr Cayenne got a turtle-fish sent to him from a Glasgow merchant, and it was living when it came to the Wheatrig House, and was one of the most remarkable beasts that had ever been seen in our country side. It weighed as much as a well-fed calf, and had three kinds of meat in its body, fish, flesh, and fowl, and it had four water-wings, for they could not be properly called fins; but what was little short of a miracle about the creature, happened after the head was cutted off, when, if a finger was offered to it, it would open its mouth and snap at it, and all this after the carcass was divided for dressing.

Mr Cayenne made a feast on the occasion to many of the neighbouring gentry, to the which I was invited; and we drank lime-punch as we ate the turtle, which, as I understand, is the fashion in practice among the Glasgow West Indy merchants, who are famed as great hands with turtles and lime-punch. But it is a sort of food that I should not like to fare long upon. I was not right the next day; and I have heard it said, that when eaten too often, it has a tendency to harden the heart and make it crave for greater luxuries.

But the story of the turtle is nothing to that of the Mass, which, with all its mummeries and abominations, was brought into Cayenneville by an Irish priest of the name of Father O'Grady, who was confessor to some of the poor deluded Irish labourers about the new houses and the cotton-mill. How he had the impudence to set up that momento of Satan, the crucifix, within my parish and jurisdiction, was what I never could get to the bottom of; but the soul was shaken within me, when, on the Monday after, one of the elders came to the manse, and told me that the old dragon of Popery, with its seven heads and ten horns, had been triumphing in Cayenneville on the foregoing Lord's day! I lost no time in convening the session to see what was to be done; much, however, to my surprise, the elders recommended no step to be taken, but only a zealous endeavour to greater Christian excellence on our part, by which we should put the beast and his worshippers to shame and flight. I am free to confess, that, at the time, I did not think this the wisest counsel which they might have given; for, in the heat of my alarm, I was for attacking the enemy in his camp. But they prudently observed, that the days of religious persecution were past, and it was a comfort to see mankind cherishing any sense of religion at all, after the vehement infidelity that had been sent abroad by the French Republicans; and to this opinion, now that I have had years to sift its wisdom, I own myself a convert and proselyte.

Fortunately, however, for my peace of mind, there proved to be but five Roman Catholics in Cayenneville; and Father O'Grady not being able to make a living there, packed up his Virgin Marys, saints, and painted Agneses in a portmanteau, and went off in the Ayr fly one morning for Glasgow, where I hear he has since met with all the encouragement that might be expected from the ignorant and idolatrous inhabitants of that great city.

Scarcely were we well rid of Father O'Grady, when another interloper entered the parish. He was more dangerous, in the opinion of the session, than even the Pope of Rome himself; for he came to teach the flagrant heresy of Universal Redemption, a most consolatory doctrine to the sinner that is loth to repent, and who loves to troll his iniquity like a sweet morsel under his

tongue. Mr Martin Siftwell, who was the last ta'en on elder, and who had received a liberal and judicious education, and was, moreover, naturally possessed of a quick penetration, observed, in speaking of this new doctrine, that the grossest papist sinner might have some qualms of fear after he had bought the Pope's pardon, and might thereby be led to a reformation of life; but that the doctrine of universal redemption was a bribe to commit sin, the wickedest mortal, according to it, being only liable to a few thousand years, more or less, of suffering, which, compared with eternity, was but a momentary pang, like having a tooth drawn for the toothache. Mr Siftwell is a shrewd and clear-seeing man in points of theology, and I would trust a great deal to what he says, as I have not, at my advanced age, such a mind for the kittle crudities of polemical investigation that I had in my younger years, especially when I was a student in the Divinity Hall of Glasgow.

It will be seen from all I have herein recorded, that, in the course of this year, there was a general resuscitation of religious sentiments; for what happened in my parish was but a type and index to the rest of the world. We had, however, one memorable that must stand by itself; for although neither death nor bloodshed happened, yet was it cause of the fear of both.

A rumour reached us from the Clyde, that a French man-of-war had appeared in a Highland loch, and that all the Greenock volunteers had embarked in merchant vessels to bring her in for a prize. Our volunteers were just jumping and yowling, like chained dogs, to be at her too; but the colonel, Sir Hugh, would do nothing without orders from his superiors. Mr Cayenne, though an aged man above seventy, was as bold as a lion, and came forth in the old garb of an American huntsman, like, as I was told, a Robin Hood in the play is; and it was just a sport to see him, feckless man, trying to march so crouselly with his lean, shaking hands. But the whole affair proved a false alarm, and our men, when they heard it, were as well pleased that they had been constrained to sleep in their warm beds at home, instead of lying on coils of cables, like the gallant Greenock sharpshooters.

CHAPTER XLVI.—YEAR 1805.

RETRENCHMENT OF THE EXTRAVAGANT EXPENSES USUAL AT BURIALS—I USE AN EXPEDIENT FOR PUTTING EVEN THE SECOND SERVICE OUT OF FASHION.

FOR some time I had meditated a reformation in the parish, and this year I carried the same into effect. I had often noticed with concern, that, out of a mistaken notion of paying respect to the dead, my people were wont to go to great lengths at their burials, and dealt round short-bread and sugar-biscuit, with wine and other confections, as if there had been no ha'd in their hands; which straitened many a poor family, making the dispensation of the Lord a heavier temporal calamity than it should naturally have been. Accordingly, on consulting with Mrs Balwhidder, who has a most judicious judgment, it was thought that my interference would go a great way to lighten the evil. I therefore advised with those whose friends were taken from them, not to make that amplitude of preparation which used to be the fashion, nor to continue handing about as long as the folk would take, but only at the very most to go no more than three times round with the service. Objections were made to this, as if it would be thought mean; but I put on a stern visage, and told them, that if they did more I would rise up, and rebuke and forbid the extravagance. So three services became the uttermost modicum at all burials. This was doing much, but it was not all that I wished to do.

I considered that the best reformations are those which proceed step by step, and stop at that point where the consent to what has been established becomes general; and so I governed myself, and therefore interfered no farther; but I was determined to set an example. Accordingly, at the very next dregy, after I partook of one service, I made a bow to the servitors and they passed on, but all before me had partaken of the second service; some, however, of those after me did as I did, so I foresaw that in a quiet canny way I would bring in the fashion of being satisfied with one service. I therefore, from that time, always took my place as near as possible to the door, where the chief

mourner sat, and made a point of nodding away the second service, which has now grown into a custom, to the great advantage of surviving relations.

But in this reforming business I was not altogether pleased with our poet; for he took a pawkie view of my endeavours, and indited a ballad on the subject, in the which he makes a clattering carlin describe what took place, so as to turn a very solemn matter into a kind of derision. When he brought his verse and read it to me, I told him that I thought it was overly natural; for I could not find another term to designate the cause of the dissatisfaction that I had with it; but Mrs Balwhidder said that it might help my plan if it were made public; so upon her advice we got some of Mr Lorimore's best writers to make copies of it for distribution, which was not without fruit and influence. But a sore thing happened at the very next burial. As soon as the nodding away of the second service began, I could see that the gravity of the whole meeting was discomposed; and some of the irreverent young chieils almost broke out into even-down laughter, which vexed me exceedingly. Mrs Balwhidder, howsoever, comforted me by saying, that custom in time would make it familiar, and by-and-by the thing would pass as a matter of course, until one service would be all that folk would offer; and truly the thing is coming to that, for only two services are now handed round, and the second is regularly nodded by.

CHAPTER XLVII.—YEAR 1806.

THE DEATH-BED BEHAVIOUR OF MR CAYENNE—A SCHISM IN THE PARISH, AND A
SUBSCRIPTION TO BUILD A MEETING-HOUSE.

MR CAYENNE of Wheatrig having for several years been in a declining way, partly brought on by the consuming fire of his furious passion, and partly by the decay of old age, sent for me on the evening of the first Sabbath of March in this year. I was surprised at the message, and went to the Wheatrig House directly, where, by the lights in the windows as I gaed up

through the policy to the door, I saw something extraordinary was going on. Sambo, the blackamoor servant, opened the door, and, without speaking, shook his head ; for it was an affectionate creature, and as fond of his master as if he had been his own father. By this sign I guessed that the old gentleman was thought to be drawing near his latter end ; so I walked softly after Sambo up the stair, and was shown into the chamber where Mr Cayenne, since he had been confined to the house, usually sat. His wife had been dead some years before.

Mr Cayenne was sitting in his easy chair, with a white cotton nightcap on his head, and a pillow at his shoulders to keep him straight. But his head had fallen down on his breast, and he breathed like a panting baby. His legs were swelled, and his feet rested on a footstool. His face, which was wont to be the colour of a peony rose, was of a yellow hue, with a patch of red on each cheek like a wafer ; and his nose was shirpit and sharp, and of an unnatural purple. Death was evidently fighting with nature for the possession of the body. " Heaven have mercy on his soul ! " said I to myself, as I sat down beside him.

When I had been seated some time, the power was given him to raise his head as it were a-jee ; and he looked at me with the tail of his eye, which I saw was glittering and glassy. " Doctor," for he always called me doctor, though I am not of that degree, " I am glad to see you," were his words, uttered with some difficulty.

" How do you find yourself, sir ? " I replied, in a sympathizing manner.

" Damned bad," said he, as if I had been the cause of his suffering. I was daunted to the very heart to hear him in such an unregenerate state ; but after a short pause I addressed myself to him again, saying, that " I hoped he would soon be more at ease ; and he should bear in mind that the Lord chasteneth whom he loveth "

" The devil take such love ! " was his awful answer, which was to me as a blow on the forehead with a melle. However, I was resolved to do my duty to the miserable sinner, let him say what he would. Accordingly, I stooped towards him with my hands on my knees, and said in a compassionate voice, " It's very true,

sir, that you are in great agony ; but the goodness of God is without bound."

"Curse me if I think so, doctor!" replied the dying uncircumcised Philistine. But he added at whiles, his breathlessness being grievous, and often broken by a sore hiccup, "I am, however, no saint, as you know, doctor ; so I wish you to put in a word for me, doctor ; for you know that in these times, doctor, it is the duty of every good subject to die a Christian."

This was a poor account of the state of his soul ; but it was plain I could make no better o't, by entering into any religious discourse or controversy with him, he being then in the last gasp ; so I knelt down and prayed for him with great sincerity, imploring the Lord, as an awakening sense of grace to the dying man, that it would please him to lift up, though it were but for the season of a minute, the chastening hand which was laid so heavily upon his aged servant ; at which Mr Cayenne, as if indeed, the hand had been then lifted, cried out, "None of that stuff, doctor ; you know that I cannot call myself his servant."

Was ever a minister in his prayer so broken in upon by a perishing sinner ! However, I had the weight of a duty upon me, and made no reply, but continued, "Thou hearest, O Lord, how he confesses his unworthiness ! Let not thy compassion, therefore, be withheld, but verify to him the words that I have spoken in faith, of the boundlessness of thy goodness, and the infinite multitude of thy tender mercies." I then calmly, but sadly, sat down, and presently, as if my prayer had been heard, relief was granted ; for Mr Cayenne raised his head, and giving me a queer look, said, "That last clause of your petition, doctor, was well put, and I think, too, it has been granted, for I am easier"—adding, "I have no doubt, doctor, given much offence in the world, and oftenest when I meant to do good ; but I have wilfully injured no man ; and as God is my judge, and his goodness, you say, is so great, he may, perhaps, take my soul into his holy keeping." In saying which words, Mr Cayenne dropped his head upon his breast, his breathing ceased, and he was wafted away out of this world with as little trouble as a blameless baby.

This event soon led to a change among us. In the settling

of Mr Cayenne's affairs in the Cotton-mill Company, it was found that he had left such a power of money, that it was needful to the concern, in order that they might settle with the doers under his testament, to take in other partners. By this Mr Speckle came to be a resident in the parish, he having taken up a portion of Mr Cayenne's share. He likewise took a tack of the house and policy of Wheatrig. But although Mr Speckle was a far more conversible man than his predecessor, and had a wonderful plausibility in business, the affairs of the company did not thrive in his hands. Some said this was owing to his having owre many irons in the fire; others, to the circumstances of the times: in my judgment, however, both helped; but the issue belongs to the events of another year. In the meanwhile, I should here note, that in the course of this current Ann. Dom. it pleased Heaven to visit me with a severe trial; the nature of which I will here record at length—the upshot I will make known hereafter.

From the planting of inhabitants in the cotton-mill town of Cayenneville, or as the country folk, not used to such langnebbit words, now call it, Canaille, there had come in upon the parish various sectarians among the weavers, some of whom were not satisfied with the gospel as I preached it, and endeavoured to practise it in my walk and conversation; and they began to speak of building a kirk for themselves, and of getting a minister that would give them the gospel more to their own ignorant fancies. I was exceedingly wroth and disturbed when the thing was first mentioned to me; and I very earnestly, from the pulpit, next Lord's day, lectured on the growth of newfangled doctrines; which, however, instead of having the wonted effect of my discourses, set up the theological weavers in a bleeze, and the very Monday following they named a committee, to raise money by subscription to build a meeting-house. This was the first overt act of insubordination, collectively manifested, in the parish; and it was conducted with all that crafty dexterity with which the infidel and jacobin spirit of the French Revolution had corrupted the honest simplicity of our good old hameward fashions. In the course of a very short time, the Canaille folk had raised a large sum, and seduced not a few of my people

into their schism, by which they were enabled to set about building their kirk; the foundations thereof were not, however, laid till the following year, but their proceedings gave me a het heart, for they were like an open rebellion to my authority, and a contemptuous disregard of that religious allegiance which is due from the flock to the pastor.

On Christmas-day the wind broke off the main arm of our Adam and Eve pear-tree; and I grieved for it more as a type and sign of the threatened partition, than on account of the damage, though the fruit was the juiciest in all the country side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.—YEAR 1807.

NUMEROUS MARRIAGES—ACCOUNT OF A PAY-WEDDING MADE TO SET UP A SHOP.

THIS was a year to me of satisfaction in many points; for a greater number of my younger flock married in it, than had done for any one of ten years prior. They were chiefly the offspring of the marriages that took place at the close of the American war; and I was pleased to see the duplication of well-doing, as I think marrying is, having always considered the command to increase and multiply, a holy ordinance, which the circumstances of this world but too often interfere to prevent.

It was also made manifest to me, that in this year there was a very general renewal in the hearts of men, of a sense of the utility, even in earthly affairs, of a religious life: in some, I trust it was more than prudence, and really a birth of grace. Whether this was owing to the upshot of the French Revolution, all men being pretty well satisfied in their minds, that uproar and rebellion make but an ill way of righting wrongs, or that the swarm of unruly youth, the offspring, as I have said, of the marriages after the American war, had grown sobered from their follies, and saw things in a better light, I cannot take upon me to say. But it was very edifying to me, their minister, to see several

lads who had been both wild and free in their principles, marrying with sobriety, and taking their wives to the kirk with the comely decorum of heads of families.

But I was now growing old, and could go seldomer out among my people than in former days; so that I was less a partaker of their ploys and banquets, either at birth, bridal, or burial. I heard, however, all that went on at them, and I made it a rule, after giving the blessing at the end of the ceremony, to admonish the bride and bridegroom to ca' canny, and join trembling with their mirth. It behoved me on one occasion, however, to break through a rule that age and frailty had imposed upon me, and to go to the wedding of Tibby Banes, the daughter of the betheral, because she had once been a servant in the manse, besides the obligation upon me, from her father's part both in the kirk and kirkyard. Mrs Balwhidder went with me, for she liked to countenance the pleasantries of my people; and, over and above all, it was a pay-wedding, in order to set up the bridegroom in a shop.

There was, to be sure, a great multitude, gentle and semple, of all denominations, with two fiddles and a bass, and the volunteers' fife and drum; and the jollity that went on was a perfect feast of itself, though the wedding-supper was a prodigy of abundance. The auld carles kecklet with fainness as they saw the young dancers; and the carlins sat on forms, as mim as May puddocks, with their shawls pinned apart, to show their muslin napkins. But, after supper, when they had got a glass of the punch, their heels showed their mettle, and grannies danced with their oyes, holding out their hands as if they had been spinning with two rocks. I told Colin Mavis, the poet, that an *Infare* was a fine subject for his muse; and soon after he indited an excellent ballad under that title, which he projects to publish, with other ditties, by subscription; and I have no doubt a liberal and discerning public will give him all manner of encouragement, for that is the food of talent of every kind; and without cheering, no one can say what an author's faculty naturally is.

CHAPTER XLIX.—YEAR 1808.

FAILURE OF MR SPECKLE, THE PROPRIETOR OF THE COTTON-MILL—THE MELANCHOLY END OF ONE OF THE OVERSEERS AND HIS WIFE.

THROUGH all the wars that have raged from the time of the King's accession to the throne, there has been a gradually coming nearer and nearer to our gates, which is a very alarming thing to think of. In the first, at the time he came to the crown, we suffered nothing. Not one belonging to the parish was engaged in the battles thereof; and the news of victories, before they reached us, which was generally by word of mouth, were old tales. In the American war, as I have related at length, we had an immediate participation; but those that suffered were only a few individuals, and the evil was done at a distance, and reached us not until the worst of its effects were spent. And during the first term of the present just and necessary contest for all that is dear to us as a people, although, by the offswarming of some of our restless youth, we had our part and portion in common with the rest of the Christian world; yet still there was at home a great augmentation of prosperity, and every thing had thriven in a surprising manner; somewhat, however, to the detriment of our country simplicity. By the building of the cotton-mill, and the rising up of the new town of Cayenneville, we had intromitted so much with concerns of trade, that we were become a part of the great web of commercial reciprocities, and felt in our corner and extremity, every touch or stir that was made on any part of the texture. The consequence of this I have now to relate.

Various rumours had been floating about the business of the cotton manufacturers not being so lucrative as it had been; and Bonaparte, as it is well known, was a perfect limb of Satan against our prosperity, having recourse to the most wicked means and purposes to bring ruin upon us as a nation. His cantrips, in this year, began to have a dreadful effect.

For some time it had been observed in the parish, that Mr Speckle of the cotton-mill, went very often to Glasgow, and was

sometimes off at a few minutes' warning to London; and the neighbours began to guess and wonder at what could be the cause of all this running here, and riding there, as if the little-gude was at his heels. Sober folk augured ill o't; and it was remarked, likewise, that there was a haste and confusion in his mind, which betokened a foretaste of some change of fortune. At last, in the fulness of time, the babe was born.

On a Saturday night, Mr Speckle came out late from Glasgow; on the Sabbath he was with all his family at the kirk, looking as a man that had changed his way of life; and on the Monday, when the spinners went to the mill, they were told that the company had stopped payment. Never did a thunder-clap daunt the heart like this news; for the bread in a moment was snatched from more than a thousand mouths. It was a scene not to be described, to see the cotton-spinners and the weavers, with their wives and children, standing in bands along the road, all looking and speaking as if they had lost a dear friend or parent. For my part, I could not bear the sight, but hid myself in my closet, and prayed to the Lord to mitigate a calamity which seemed to me past the capacity of man to remedy; for what could our parish fund do in the way of helping a whole town, thus suddenly thrown out of bread?

In the evening, however, I was strengthened, and convened the elders at the manse to consult with them on what was best to be done; for it was well known that the sufferers had made no provision for a sore foot. But all our gathered judgments could determine nothing; and therefore we resolved to wait the issue, not doubting but that HE who sends the night, would bring the day in His good and gracious time, which so fell out. Some of them who had the largest experience of such vicissitudes, immediately began to pack up their ends and their awls, and to hie them into Glasgow and Paisley in quest of employ; but those who trusted to the hopes that Mr Speckle himself still cherished, lingered long, and were obligated to submit to sore distress. After a time, however, it was found that the company was ruined; and the mill being sold for the benefit of the creditors, it was bought by another Glasgow company, who, by getting it a good bargain, and managing well, have it still, and have made it again

a blessing to the country. At the time of the stoppage, however, we saw that commercial prosperity, flush as it might be, was but a perishable commodity, and from thence, both by public discourse and private exhortation, I have recommended to the workmen to lay up something for a reverse; and showed that, by doing with their bawbees and pennies what the great do with their pounds, they might in time get a pose to help them in the day of need. This advice they have followed, and made up a Savings Bank, which is a pillow of comfort to many an industrious head of a family.

But I should not close this account of the disaster that befell Mr Speckle, and the cotton-mill company, without relating a very melancholy case that was the consequence. Among the overseers there was a Mr Dwining, an Englishman from Manchester, where he had seen better days, having had himself there of his own property, once as large a mill, according to report, as the Cayenneville mill. He was certainly a man above the common, and his wife was a lady in every point; but they held themselves by themselves, and shunned all manner of civility, giving up their whole attention to their two little boys, who were really like creatures of a better race than the callans of our clachan.

On the failure of the company, Mr Dwining was observed by those who were present to be particularly distressed: his salary being his all; but he said little, and went thoughtfully home. Some days after he was seen walking by himself with a pale face, a heavy eye, and slow step—all tokens of a sorrowful heart. Soon after, he was missed altogether; nobody saw him. The door of his house was however open, and his two pretty boys were as lively as usual, on the green before the door. I happened to pass when they were there, and I asked them how their father and mother were. They said they were still in bed, and would no waken, and the innocent lambs took me by the hand, to make me waken their parents. I know not what was in it, but I trembled from head to foot, and I was led in by the babies, as if I had not the power to resist. Never shall I forget what I saw in that bed

* * * * *

I found a letter on the table; and I came away, locking the door
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behind me, and took the lovely prattling orphans home. I cloud but shake my head and weep, as I gave them to the care of Mrs Balwhidder, and she was terrified but said nothing. I then read the letter. It was to send the bairns to a gentleman, their uncle, in London. Oh! it is a terrible tale; but the winding-sheet and the earth is over it. I sent for two of my elders. I related what I had seen. Two coffins were got, and the bodies laid in them; and the next day, with one of the fatherless bairns in each hand, I followed them to the grave, which was dug in that part of the kirkyard where unchristened babies are laid. We durst not take it upon us to do more; but few knew the reason, and some thought it was because the deceased were strangers, and had no regular lair.

I dressed the two bonny orphans in the best mourning at my own cost, and kept them in the manse till we could get an answer from their uncle, to whom I sent their father's letter. It stung him to the quick, and he came down all the way from London, and took the children away himself. Oh! he was a vexed man when the beautiful bairns, on being told he was their uncle, ran into his arms, and complained that their papa and mamma had slept so long, that they would never waken.

CHAPTER L.—YEAR 1809.

OPENING OF A MEETING-HOUSE—THE ELDERS COME TO THE MANSE, AND OFFER ME
A HELPER.

As I come towards the events of these latter days, I am surprised to find myself not at all so distinct in my recollection of them as in those of the first of my ministry; being apt to confound the things of one occasion with those of another, which Mrs Balwhidder says is an admonishment to me to leave off my writing. But, please God, I will endeavour to fulfil this as I have through life tried, to the best of my capacity, to do every other duty; and, with the help of Mrs Balwhidder, who has a very clear understanding, I think I may get through my task in

a creditable manner, which is all I aspire after ; not writing for a vain world, but only to testify to posterity anent the great changes that have happened in my day and generation—a period which all the best-informed writers say, has not had its match in the history of the world since the beginning of time.

By the failure of the cotton-mill company, whose affairs were not settled till the spring of this year, there was great suffering during the winter ; but my people, those that still adhered to the establishment, bore their share of the dispensation with meekness and patience, nor was there wanting edifying monuments of resignation even among the stravaigers.

On the day that the Canaille Meeting-house was opened, which was in the summer, I was smitten to the heart to see the empty seats that were in my kirk ; for all the thoughtless, and some that I had a better opinion of, went to hear the opening discourse. Satan that day had power given to him to buffet me as he did Job of old ; and when I looked around and saw the empty seats, my corruption rose, and I forgot myself in the remembering prayer ; for when I prayed for all denominations of Christians, and worshippers, and infidels, I could not speak of the schismatics with patience, but entreated the Lord to do with the hobleshow at Cayenneville, as he saw meet in his displeasure, the which, when I came afterwards to think upon, I grieved at with a sore contrition.

In the course of the week following, the elders, in a body, came to me in the manse, and after much commendation of my godly ministry, they said, that seeing I was now growing old, they thought they could not testify their respect for me in a better manner than by agreeing to get me a helper. But I would not at that time listen to such a proposal, for I felt no falling off in my powers of preaching ; on the contrary, I found myself growing better at it, as I was enabled to hold forth, in an easy manner, often a whole half hour longer than I could do a dozen years before. Therefore nothing was done in this year anent my resignation ; but during the winter, Mrs Balwhidder was often grieved, in the bad weather, that I should preach, and, in short, so worked upon my affections, that I began to think it was fitting for me to comply with the advice of my

friends. Accordingly, in the course of the winter, the elders began to cast about for a helper ; and during the bleak weather in the ensuing spring, several young men spared me from the necessity of preaching. But this relates to the concerns of the next and last year of my ministry. So I will now proceed to give an account of it, very thankful that I have been permitted, in unmolested tranquillity, to bring my history to such a point.

CHAPTER LI.—YEAR 1810.

CONCLUSION—I REPAIR TO THE CHURCH FOR THE LAST TIME—AFTERWARDS RECEIVE A SILVER SERVER FROM THE PARISHIONERS—AND STILL CONTINUE TO MARRY AND BAPTIZE.

My tasks are all near a close ; and in writing this final record of my ministry, the very sound of my pen admonishes me that my life is a burden on the back of flying Time, that he will soon be obliged to lay down in his great storehouse—the grave. Old age has, indeed, long warned me to prepare for rest ; and the darkened windows of my sight show that the night is coming on, while deafness, like a door fast barred, has shut out all the pleasant sounds of this world, and inclosed me, as it were, in a prison, even from the voices of my friends.

I have lived longer than the common lot of man, and I have seen, in my time, many mutations and turnings, and ups and downs, notwithstanding the great spread that has been in our national prosperity. I have beheld them that were flourishing like the green bay-trees, made desolate, and their branches scattered. But, in my own estate, I have had a large and liberal experience of goodness.

At the beginning of my ministry I was reviled and rejected ; but my honest endeavours to prove a faithful shepherd were blessed from on high, and rewarded with the affection of my flock. Perhaps, in the vanity of doting old age, I thought in this there was a merit due to myself, which made the Lord to send the chastisement of the Canaille schism among my people ;

for I was then wroth without judgment, and by my heat hastened into an open division the flaw that a more considerate manner might have healed. But I confess my fault, and submit my cheek to the smiter; and now I see that the finger of Wisdom was in that probation, and it was far better that the weavers meddled with the things of God, which they could not change, than with those of the King, which they could only harm. In that matter, however, I was like our gracious monarch in the American war; for though I thereby lost the pastoral allegiance of a portion of my people, in like manner as he did of his American subjects, yet, after the separation, I was enabled so to deport myself, that they showed me many voluntary testimonies of affectionate respect, and which it would be a vain glory in me to rehearse here. One thing I must record, because it is as much to their honour as it is to mine.

When it was known that I was to preach my last sermon, every one of those who had been my hearers, and who had seceded to the Canaille meeting, made it a point that day to be in the parish kirk, and to stand in the crowd, that made a lane of reverence for me to pass from the kirk-door to the back-yett of the manse. And shortly after, a deputation of all their brethren, with their minister at their head, came to me one morning, and presented to me a server of silver, in token, as they were pleased to say, of their esteem for my blameless life, and the charity that I had practised towards the poor of all sects in the neighbourhood; which is set forth in a well-penned inscription, written by a weaver lad that works for his daily bread. Such a thing would have been a prodigy at the beginning of my ministry; but the progress of book-learning and education has been wonderful since, and with it has come a spirit of greater liberality than the world knew before, bringing men of adverse principles and doctrines into a more humane communion with each other; showing that it's by the mollifying influence of knowledge the time will come to pass, when the tiger of papistry shall lie down with the lamb of reformation, and the vultures of prelacy be as harmless as the presbyterian doves; when the independent, the anabaptist, and every other order and denomination of Christians, not forgetting even those

poor wee wrens of the Lord, the burghers and anti-burghers, who will pick from the hand of patronage, and dread no snare.

On the next Sunday, after my farewell discourse, I took the arm of Mrs Balwhidder, and with my cane in my hand, walked to our own pew, where I sat some time; but, owing to my deafness, not being able to hear, I have not since gone back to the church. But my people are fond of having their weans still christened by me, and the young folk, such as are of a serious turn, come to be married at my hands, believing, as they say, that there is something good in the blessing of an aged gospel minister. But even this remnant of my gown I must lay aside; for Mrs Balwhidder is now and then obliged to stop me in my prayers, as I sometimes wander—pronouncing the baptismal blessing upon a bride and bridegroom, talking as if they were already parents. I am thankful, however, that I have been spared with a sound mind to write this book to the end; but it is my last task, and, indeed, really I have no more to say, saving only to wish a blessing on all people from on high, where I soon hope to be, and to meet there all the old and long-departed sheep of my flock, especially the first and second Mrs Balwhidders.

END OF ANNALS OF THE PARISH.

THE AYRSHIRE LEGATEES



THE AYRSHIRE LEGATEES.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEPARTURE.

ON New-year's day Doctor Pringle received a letter from India, informing him that his cousin, Colonel Armour, had died at Hydrabad, and left him his residuary legatee. The same post brought other letters on the same subject from the agent of the deceased in London, by which it was evident to the whole family that no time should be lost in looking after their interests in the hands of such brief and abrupt correspondents. "To say the least of it," as the doctor himself sedately remarked, "considering the greatness of the forthcoming property, Messieurs Richard Argent and Company, of New Broad Street, might have given a notion as to the particulars of the residue." It was therefore determined that, as soon as the requisite arrangements could be made, the doctor and Mrs Pringle should set out for the metropolis, to obtain a speedy settlement with the agents; and as Rachel had now, to use an expression of her mother's, a "prospect before her," that she also should accompany them: Andrew, who had just been called to the bar, and who had come to the manse to spend a few days after attaining that distinction, modestly suggested, that, considering the various professional points which might be involved in the objects of his father's journey; and considering also the retired life which his father had led in the rural village of Garnock, it might be of importance to have the advantage of legal advice.

Mrs Pringle interrupted this harangue, by saying, "We see what you would be at, Andrew; ye're just wanting to come with

us, and on this occasion I'm no for making step-bairns; so we'll a' gang thegither."

The doctor had been for many years the incumbent of Garnock, which is pleasantly situated between Irvine and Kilwinning, and, on account of the benevolence of his disposition, was much beloved by his parishioners. Some of the pawkie among them used indeed to say, in answer to the godly of Kilmarnock, and other admirers of the late great John Russel of that formerly orthodox town, by whom Dr Pringle's powers as a preacher were held in no particular estimation,—“He kens our poopit's frail, and spar'st to save outlay to the heritors.” As for Mrs Pringle, there is not such another minister's wife, both for economy and management, within the jurisdiction of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr; and to this fact, the following letter to Miss Mally Glencairn, a maiden lady residing in the Kirkgate of Irvine, a street that has been likened unto the kingdom of heaven, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, will abundantly testify.

LETTER I.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Mally Glencairn.

Garnock Manse.

DEAR MISS MALLY,—The doctor has had extraordinar news from India and London, where we are all going, as soon as me and Rachel can get ourselves in order; so I beg you will go to Bailie Delap's shop, and get swatches of his best black bombaseen, and crape, and muslin, and bring them over to the manse the morn's morning. If you cannot come yourself, and the day should be wat, send Nanny Eydent, the mantua-maker, with them; you'll be sure to send Nanny ony how, and I requeesht that, on this okasion, ye'll get the very best the Bailie has, and I'll tell you all about it when you come. You will get, likewise, swatches of mourning print, with the lowest prices. I'll no be so particular about them, as they are for the servant lasses, and there's no need, for all the greatness of God's gifts, that we should be wasterful. Let Mrs Glibbans know, that the doctor's second cousin, the colonel, that was in the East Indies,

is no more;—I am sure she will sympathese with our loss on this melancholy okasion. Tell her, as I'll no be out till our mournings are made, I would take it kind if she would come over and eate a bit of dinner on Sunday. The doctor will no preach himself, but there's to be an excellent young man, an acquaintance of Andrew's, that has the repute of being both sound and hellaquaint. But no more at present, and looking for you apd Nanny Eydent, with the swatches,—I am, dear Miss Mally, your sinsare friend,

JANET PRINGLE.

The doctor being of opinion that, until they had something in hand from the legacy, they should walk in the paths of moderation, it was resolved to proceed by the coach from Irvine to Greenock, there embark in a steam-boat for Glasgow, and, crossing the country to Edinburgh, take their passage at Leith in one of the smacks for London. But we must let the parties speak for themselves.

LETTER II.

Miss Rachel Pringle to Miss Isabella Todd.

Greenock.

MY DEAR ISABELLA,—I know not why the dejection with which I parted from you still hangs upon my heart, and grows heavier as I am drawn farther and farther away. The uncertainty of the future—the dangers of the sea—all combine to sadden my too sensitive spirit. Still, however, I will exert myself, and try to give you some account of our momentous journey.

The morning on which we bade farewell for a time—alas! it was to me as if for ever—to my native shades of Garnock, the weather was cold, bleak, and boisterous, and the waves came rolling in majestic fury towards the shore, when we arrived at the Tontine Inn of Ardrossan. What a monument has the late Earl of Eglinton left there of his public spirit!—It should embalm his memory in the hearts of future ages, as I doubt not **but** in time Ardrossan will become a grand emporium; but the

people of Saltcoats, a sordid race, complain that it will be their ruin; and the Paisley subscribers to his lordship's canal grow pale when they think of profit.

The road, after leaving Ardrossan, lies along the shore. The blast came dark from the waters, and the clouds lay piled in every form of grandeur on the lofty peaks of Arran. The view on the right hand is limited to the foot of a range of abrupt mean hills, and on the left it meets the sea—as we were obliged to keep the glasses up, our drive for several miles was objectless and dreary. When we had ascended a hill, leaving Kilbride on the left, we passed under the walls of an ancient tower. What delightful ideas are associated with the sight of such venerable remains of antiquity!

Leaving that lofty relic of our warlike ancestors, we descended again towards the shore. On the one side lay the Cumbra islands, and Bute, dear to departed royalty. Afar beyond them, in the hoary magnificence of nature, rise the mountains of Argyleshire; the cairns, as my brother says, of a former world. On the other side of the road, we saw the cloistered ruins of the religious house of Southenan, a nunnery in those days of romantic adventure, when to live was to enjoy a poetical element. In such a sweet sequestered retreat, how much more pleasing to the soul it would have been, for you and I, like two captive birds in one cage, to have sung away our hours in innocence, than for me to be thus torn from you by fate, and all on account of that mercenary legacy, perchance the spoils of some unfortunate Hindoo Rajah!

At Largs we halted to change horses, and saw the barrows of those who fell in the great battle. We then continued our journey along the foot of stupendous precipices; and high, sublime, and darkened with the shadow of antiquity, we saw, upon its lofty station, the ancient castle of Skelmorlie, where the Montgomeries of other days held their gorgeous banquets, and that brave knight who fell at Chevy-Chase came pricking forth on his milkwhite steed, as Sir Walter Scott would have described him.—But the age of chivalry is past, and the glory of Europe departed for ever!

When we crossed the stream that divides the counties of Ayr

and Renfrew, we beheld, in all the apart and consequentiality of pride, the house of Kelly overlooking the social villas of Wemyss Bay. My brother compared it to a sugar hogshead, and them to cotton-bags; for the loftythane of Kelly is but a West India planter, and the inhabitants of the villas on the shore are Glasgow manufacturers.

To this succeeded a dull drive of about two miles, and then at once we entered the pretty village of Inverkip. A slight snow shower had given to the landscape a sort of copperplate effect; but still the forms of things, though but sketched, as it were, with China ink, were calculated to produce interesting impressions. After ascending, by a gentle acclivity, into a picturesque and romantic pass, we entered a spacious valley, and, in the course of little more than half an hour, reached this town; the largest, the most populous, and the most superb, that I have yet seen. But what are all its warehouses, ships, and smell of tar, and other odoriferous circumstances of fishery and the sea, compared with the green swelling hills, the fragrant bean-fields, and the peaceful groves of my native Garnock!

The people of this town are a very busy and clever race, but much given to litigation. My brother says that they are the greatest benefactors to the Outer-House, and that their lawsuits are the most amusing and profitable before the courts, being less for the purpose of determining what is right than what is lawful. The chambermaid of the inn where we lodge pointed out to me, on the opposite side of the street, a magnificent edifice erected for balls; but the subscribers have resolved not to allow any dancing till it is determined by the Court of Session to whom the seats and chairs belong, as they were brought from another house where the assemblies were formerly held. I have heard a lawsuit compared to a country dance, in which, after a great bustle and regular confusion, the parties stand still, all tired, just on the spot where they began; but this is the first time that the judges of the land have been called on to decide when a dance may begin.

We arrived too late for the steam-boat, and are obliged to wait till Monday morning; but to-morrow we shall go to church, where I expect to see what sort of creatures the beaux are. The

Greenock ladies have a great name for beauty; but those that I have seen are perfect frights. Such of the gentlemen as I have observed passing the windows of the inn may do; but I declare the ladies have nothing of which any woman ought to be proud. Had we known that we ran a risk of not getting a steam-boat, my mother would have provided an introductory letter or two from some of her Irvine friends; but here we are almost entire strangers: my father, however, is acquainted with one of the magistrates, and has gone to see him. I hope he will be civil enough to ask us to his house; for an inn is a shocking place to live in, and my mother is terrified at the expense. My brother, however, has great confidence in our prospects, and orders and directs with a high hand. But my paper is full, and I am compelled to conclude, with scarcely room to say how affectionately I am yours,

RACHEL PRINGLE.

LETTER III.

The Rev. Dr Pringle to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster and Session-clerk, Garnock.

Edinburgh.

DEAR SIR,—We have got this length through many difficulties, both in the travel by land to, and by sea and land from Greenock, where we were obligated, by reason of no conveyance, to stop the Sabbath, but not without edification; for we went to hear Dr Drystour in the forenoon, who had a most weighty sermon on the tenth chapter of Nehemiah. He is surely a great orthodox divine, but rather costive in his delivery. In the afternoon, we heard a correct moral lecture on good works, in another church, from Dr Eastlight—a plain man, with a genteel congregation. The same night we took supper with a wealthy family, where we had much pleasant communion together, although the bringing in of the toddy-bowl after supper, is a fashion that has a tendency to lengthen the sederunt to unseasonable hours.

On the following morning, by the break of day, we took shipping in the steam-boat for Glasgow. I had misgivings about

the engine, which is really a thing of great docility ; but saving my concern for the boiler, we all found the place surprising comfortable. The day was bleak and cold ; but we had a good fire in a carron grate in the middle of the floor, and books to read, so that both body and mind are therein provided for.

Among the books, I fell in with a History of the Rebellion, anent the hand that an English gentleman of the name of Waverley had in it. I was grieved that I had not time to read it through, for it was wonderful interesting, and far more particular, in many points, than any other account of that affair I have yet met with ; but it's no so friendly to Protestant principles as I could have wished. However, if I get my legacy well settled, I will buy the book, and lend it to you on my return, please God, to the manse.

We were put on shore at Glasgow by breakfast-time, and there we tarried all day, as I had a power of attorney to get from Miss Jenny Macbride, my cousin, to whom the colonel left the thousand pound legacy. Miss Jenny thought the legacy should have been more, and made some obstacle to signing the power ; but both her lawyer and Andrew Pringle, my son, convinced her, that, as it was specified in the testament, she could not help it by standing out ; so at long and last Miss Jenny was persuaded to put her name to the paper.

Next day we all four got into a fly coach, and, without damage or detriment, reached this city in good time for dinner in Macgregor's hotel, a remarkable decent inn, next door to one Mr Blackwood, a civil and discreet man in the bookselling line.

Really the changes in Edinburgh since I was here, thirty years ago, are not to be told. I am confounded ; for although I have both heard and read of the New Town in the Edinburgh Advertiser, and the Scots Magazine, I had no notion of what has come to pass. It's surprising to think wherein the decay of the nation is ; for at Greenock I saw nothing but shipping and building ; at Glasgow, streets spreading as if they were one of the branches of cotton-spinning ; and here, the houses grown up as if they were sown in the seed-time with the corn by a drill-machine, or dibbled in rigs and furrows like beans and potatoes.

To-morrow, God willing, we embark in a smack at Leith, so

that you will not hear from me again till it please HIM to take us in the hollow of his hand to London. In the mean time, I have only to add, that, when the session meets, I wish you would speak to the elders, particularly to Mr Craig, no to be overly hard on that poor donsie thing, Meg Milliken, about her bairn; and tell Tam Glen, the father o't, fro'm me, that it would have been a sore heart to that pious woman, his mother, had she been living, to have witnessed such a thing; and therefore, I hope and trust he will yet confess a fault, and own Meg for his wife, though she is but something of a tawpie. However, you need not diminish her to Tam. I hope Mr Snodgrass will give as much satisfaction to the parish as can reasonably be expected in my absence; and I remain, dear sir, your friend and pastor,

ZACHARIAH PRINGLE.

Mr Micklewham received the doctor's letter about an hour before the session met on the case of Tam Glen and Meg Milliken, and took it with him to the session-house, to read it to the elders before going into the investigation. Such a long and particular letter from the doctor was, as they all justly remarked, kind and dutiful to his people, and a great pleasure to them.

Mr Daff observed, "Truly the doctor's a verra funny man, and wonderfu' jocose about the toddy-bowl." But Mr Craig said, that "sic a thing on the Lord's night gies me no pleasure; and I am for setting my face against Waverley's History of the Rebellion, whilk I hae heard spoken of among the ungodly, both at Kilwinning and Dalry; and if it has no respect to Protestant principles, I doubt it's but another dose o' the radical poison in a new guise." Mr Icenor, however, thought that "the observe on the great Doctor Drystour was very edifying; and that they should see about getting him to help at the summer Occasion."*

While they were thus reviewing, in their way, the first epistle of the doctor, the betheral came in to say that Meg and Tam were at the door. "O man!" said Mr Daff, slyly, "ye should na hae left them at the door by themselves." Mr Craig looked at him austerey, and muttered something about the growing

* The administration of the Sacrament.

immorality of this backsliding age ; but before the smoke of his indignation had kindled into eloquence, the delinquents were admitted. However, as we have nothing to do with the business, we shall leave them to their own deliberations.

CHAPTER II.

THE VOYAGE.

ON the fourteenth day after the departure of the family from the manse, the Rev. Mr Charles Snodgrass, who was appointed to officiate during the absence of the doctor, received the following letter from his old chum, Mr Andrew Pringle. It would appear that the young advocate is not so solid in the head as some of his elder brethren at the bar ; and, therefore, many of his flights and observations must be taken with an allowance on the score of his youth.

LETTER IV.

Andrew Pringle, Esq. Advocate, to the Rev. Charles Snodgrass.

London.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—We have at last reached London, after a stormy passage of seven days. The accommodation in the smacks looks extremely inviting in port, and, in fine weather, I doubt not, is comfortable, even at sea ; but in February, and in such visitations of the powers of the air as we have endured, a balloon must be a far better vehicle than all the vessels that have been constructed for passengers since the time of Noah. In the first place, the waves of the atmosphere cannot be so dangerous as those of the ocean, being but “thin air”—and I am sure they are not so disagreeable ; then the speed of the balloon is so much greater—and it would puzzle Professor Leslie to demonstrate that its motions are more unsteady. besides, who ever heard of sea-sickness in a balloon ? the consi-

deration of which alone would, to any reasonable person actually suffering under the pains of that calamity, be deemed more than an equivalent for all the little fractional difference of danger between the two modes of travelling—I shall, henceforth, regard it as a fine characteristic trait of our national prudence, that, in their journeys to France and Flanders, the Scottish witches always went by air on broomsticks and benweeds, instead of venturing by water in sieves, like those of England. But the English are under the influence of a maritime genius.

When we had got as far up the Thames as Gravesend, the wind and tide came against us, so that the vessel was obliged to anchor, and I availed myself of the circumstance, to induce the family to disembark, and go to London by LAND; and I esteem it a fortunate circumstance that we did so, the day, for the season, being uncommonly fine. After we had taken some refreshment, I procured places in a stage-coach for my mother and sister, and, with the doctor, mounted myself on the outside. My father's old-fashioned notions boggled a little at first to this arrangement, which he thought somewhat derogatory to his ministerial dignity; but his scruples were in the end overruled.

The country in this season is, of course, seen to disadvantage, but still it exhibits beauty enough to convince us what England must be when in leaf. The old gentleman's admiration of the increasing signs of what he called civilization, as we approached London, became quite eloquent; but the first view of the city from Blackheath, (which, by-the-by, is a fine common, surrounded with villas and handsome houses,) overpowered his faculties, and I shall never forget the impression it made on myself. The sun was declined towards the horizon; vast masses of dark low-hung clouds were mingled with the smoky canopy; and the dome of St Paul's, like the enormous idol of some terrible deity, throned amidst the smoke of sacrifices and magnificence, darkness and mystery, presented altogether an object of vast sublimity. I felt touched with reverence, as if I was indeed approaching the city of THE HUMAN POWERS.

The distant view of Edinburgh is picturesque and romantic; but it affects a lower class of our associations. It is, compared to that of London, what the poem of the Seasons is with respect

to *Paradise Lost*—the castellated descriptions of Walter Scott to the “Darkness” of Byron—the Sabbath of Graham to the Robbers of Schiller. In the approach to Edinburgh, leisure and cheerfulness are on the road; large spaces of rural and pastoral nature are spread openly around; and mountains, and seas, and headlands, and vessels passing beyond them, going like those that die, we know not whither, while the sun is bright on their sails, and hope with them; but, in coming to this Babylon, there is an eager haste and a hurrying on from all quarters, towards that stupendous pile of gloom, through which no eye can penetrate; an unceasing sound, like the enginery of an earthquake at work, rolls from the heart of that profound and indefinable obscurity—sometimes a faint and yellow beam of the sun strikes here and there on the vast expanse of edifices; and churches, and holy asylums, are dimly seen lifting up their countless steeples and spires, like so many lightning rods to avert the wrath of Heaven.

The entrance to Edinburgh also awakens feelings of a more pleasing character. The rugged veteran aspect of the Old Town is agreeably contrasted with the bright smooth forehead of the New, and there is not such an overwhelming torrent of animal life, as to make you pause before venturing to stem it; the noises are not so deafening, and the occasional sound of a ballad-singer, or a Highland piper, varies and enriches the discords; but here, a multitudinous assemblage of harsh alarms, of selfish contentions, and of furious carriages, driven by a fierce and insolent race, shatter the very hearing, till you partake of the activity with which all seem as much possessed as if a general apprehension prevailed, that the great clock of Time would strike the doom-hour before their tasks were done. But I must stop; for the postman with his bell, like the betheral of some ancient “borough’s town” summoning to a burial, is in the street, and warns me to conclude.—Yours,

ANDREW PRINGLE.

LETTER V.

The Rev. Dr Pringle to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster and Session-clerk, Garnock.

London, 49, Norfolk Street, Strand.

DEAR SIR,—On the first Sunday forthcoming after the receiving hereof, you will not fail to recollect in the remembering prayer, that we return thanks for our safe arrival in London, after a dangerous voyage. Well, indeed, is it ordained that we should pray for those who go down to the sea in ships, and do business on the great deep; for what me and mine have come through is unspeakable, and the hand of Providence was visibly manifested.

On the day of our embarkation at Leith, a fair wind took us onward at a blithe rate for some time; but in the course of that night the bridle of the tempest was slackened, and the curb of the billows loosened, and the ship reeled to and fro like a drunken man, and no one could stand therein. My wife and daughter lay at the point of death; Andrew Pringle, my son, also was prostrated with the grievous affliction; and the very soul within me was as if it would have been cast out of the body.

On the following day the storm abated, and the wind blew favourable; but towards the heel of the evening it again became vehement, and there was no help unto our distress. About midnight, however, it pleased Him, whose breath is the tempest, to be more sparing with the whip of his displeasure on our poor bark, as she hirpled on in her toilsome journey through the waters; and I was enabled, through his strength, to lift my head from the pillow of sickness, and ascend the deck, where I thought of Noah looking out of the window in the ark, upon the face of the desolate flood, and of Peter walking on the sea; and I said to myself, it matters not where we are, for we can be in no place where Jehovah is not there likewise, whether it be on the waves of the ocean, or the mountain tops, or in the valley and shadow of death.

The third day the wind came contrary, and in the fourth, and

the fifth, and the sixth, we were also sorely buffeted; but on the night of the sixth we entered the mouth of the river Thames, and on the morning of the seventh day of our departure, we cast anchor near a town called Gravesend, where, to our exceeding great joy, it pleased HIM, in whom alone there is salvation, to allow us once more to put our foot on the dry land.

When we had partaken of a repast, the first blessed with the blessing of an appetite from the day of our leaving our native land, we got two vacancies in a stage-coach for my wife and daughter; but with Andrew Pringle, my son, I was obligated to mount aloft on the outside. I had some scruple of conscience about this, for I was afraid of my decorum. I met, however, with nothing but the height of discretion from the other outside passengers, although I jealoused that one of them was a light woman. Really I had no notion that the English were so civilized; they were so well-bred, and the very duddiest of them spoke such a fine style of language, that when I looked around on the country, I thought myself in the land of Canaan. But it's extraordinary what a power of drink the coachmen drink, stopping and going into every change-house, and yet behaving themselves with the greatest sobriety. And then they are all so well dressed, which is no doubt owing to the poor-rates. I am thinking, however, that for all they cry against them, the poor-rates are but a small evil, since they keep the poor folk in such food and raiment, and out of the temptations to thievery: indeed, such a thing as a common beggar is not to be seen in this land, excepting here and there a sornor or a ne'er-do-weel.

When we had got to the outskirts of London, I began to be ashamed of the sin of high places, and would gladly have got into the inside of the coach, for fear of any body knowing me; but although the multitude of by-goers was like the kirk skailing at the sacrament, I saw not a kent face, nor one that took the least notice of my situation. At last we got to an inn, called *The White Horse*, Fetter-Lane, where we hired a hackney to take us to the lodgings provided for us here in Norfolk Street, by Mr Pawkie, the Scotch solicitor, a friend of Andrew Pringle, my son. Now it was that we began to experience the sharpers of London; for it seems that there are divers Norfolk Streets.

Ours was in the Strand, (mind that when you direct,) not very far from Fetter-Lane; but the hackney driver took us away to one afar off, and when we knocked at the number we thought was ours, we found ourselves at a house that should not be told. I was so mortified, that I did not know what to say; and when Andrew Pringle, my son, rebuked the man for the mistake, he only gave a cunning laugh, and said we should have told him what'na Norfolk Street we wanted. Andrew stormed at this—but I discerned that it was all owing to our own inexperience, and put an end to the contention, by telling the man to take us to Norfolk Street in the Strand, which was the direction we had got. But when we got to the door, the coachman was so extortionate, that another hobleshow arose. Mrs Pringle had been told, that, in such disputes, the best way of getting redress was to take the number of the coach; but, in trying to do so, we found it fastened on, and I thought the hackneyman would have gone by himself with laughter. Andrew, who had not observed what we were doing, when he saw us trying to take off the number, went like one demented, and paid the man, I cannot tell what, to get us out, and into the house, for fear we should have been mobbit.

I have not yet seen the colonel's agents, so can say nothing as to the business of our coming; for, landing at Gravesend, we did not bring our trunks with us, and Andrew has gone to the wharf this morning to get them, and, until we get them, we can go nowhere, which is the occasion of my writing so soon, knowing also how you and the whole parish would be anxious to hear what had become of us; and I remain, dear sir, your friend and pastor,

ZACHARIAH PRINGLE.

On Saturday evening, Saunders Dickie, the Irvine postman, suspecting that this letter was from the doctor, went with it himself, on his own feet, to Mr Micklewham, although the distance is more than two miles; but Saunders, in addition to the customary *twal pennies* on the postage, had a dram for his pains. The next morning being wet, Mr Micklewham had not an opportunity of telling any of the parishioners in the churchyard of the doctor's safe arrival; so that, when he read out the

request to return thanks, (for he was not only schoolmaster and session-clerk, but also precentor,) there was a murmur of pleasure diffused throughout the congregation; and the greatest curiosity was excited to know what the dangers were, from which their worthy pastor and his whole family had so thankfully escaped in their voyage to London; so that, when the service was over, the elders adjourned to the session-house to hear the letter read; and many of the heads of families, and other respectable parishioners, were admitted to the honours of the sitting, who all sympathized, with the greatest sincerity, in the sufferings which their minister and his family had endured. Mr Daff, however, was justly chided by Mr Craig for rubbing his hands, and giving a sort of sniggering laugh at the doctor's sitting on high with a light woman. But even Mr Snodgrass was seen to smile at the incident of taking the number off the coach, the meaning of which none but himself seemed to understand.

When the epistle had been thus duly read, Mr Micklewham promised, for the satisfaction of some of the congregation, that he would get two or three copies made by the best writers in his school, to be handed about the parish; and Mr Icenor remarked, that truly it was a thing to be held in remembrance, for he had not heard of greater tribulation by the waters since the shipwreck of the Apostle Paul.

CHAPTER III.

THE LEGACY.

Soon after the receipt of the letters which we had the pleasure of communicating in the foregoing chapter, the following was received from Mr Pringle; and the intelligence it contains is so interesting and important, that we hasten to lay it before our readers:—

LETTER VI.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Mally Glencairn.

London

MY DEAR MISS MALLY,—You must not expect no particulars from me of our journey; but as Rachel is writing all the calamities that befell us to Bell Todd, you will, no doubt, hear of them. But all is nothing to my losses. I bought from the first hand, Mr Treddles the manufacturer, two pieces of muslin, at Glasgow, such a thing not being to be had on any reasonable terms here, where they get all their fine muslins from Glasgow and Paisley; and in the same bocks with them I packit a small crock of our ain excellent poudered butter, with a delap cheese, for I was told that such commodities are not to be had genuine in London. I likewise had in it a pot of marmlet, which Miss Jenny Macbride gave me at Glasgow, assuring me that it was not only dentice, but a curiosity among the English, and my best new bumbeseen gown in peper. Howsomever, in the nailing of the bocks, which I did carefully with my oun hands one of the nails gaed in a-jee, and broke the pot of marmlet, which, by the jolting of the ship, ruined the muslin, rottened the peper round the gown, which the shivers cut into more than twenty great holes. Over and above all, the crock with the butter was, no one can tell how, crackit, and the pickle leaking out, and mixing with the seerip of the marmlet, spoilt the cheese. In short, at the object I beheld when the bocks was opened, I could have ta'en to the greeting; but I behaved with more composity on the occasion than the doctor thought it was in the power of nature to do. Howsomever, till I get a new gown, and other things, I am obliged to be a prisoner; and as the doctor does not like to go to the counting-house of the agents without me, I know not what is yet to be the consequence of our journey. But it would need to be something; for we pay four guineas and a half a-week for our dry lodgings, which is at a degree more than the doctor's whole stipend. As yet, for the cause of these misfortunes, I can give you no account of London; but there is, as every body kens, little thrift in their housekeeping. We just

buy our tea by the quarter a pound, and our loaf sugar, broken in a peper bag, by the pound, which would be a disgrace to a decent family in Scotland; and when we order dinner, we get no more than just serves, so that we have no cold meat if a stranger were coming by chance, which makes an unco bare house. The servan lasses I cannot abide; they dress better at their wark than ever I did on an ordinaire week-day at the manse; and this very morning I saw madam, the kitchen lass, mounted on a pair of pattens, washing the plain stenes before the door; na, for that matter, a bare foot is not to be seen within the four walls of London; at the least, I have na seen no such thing.

In the way of marketting, things are very good here, and, considering, not dear; but all is sold by the licht weight; only the fish are awful. Half-a-guinea for a cod's head, and no bigger than the drouds the cadgers bring from Ayr, at a shilling and eighteenpence a-piece.

Tell Miss Nanny Eydent that I have seen none of the fashions as yet; but we are going to the burial of the auld king next week, and I'll write her a particular account how the leddies are dressed; but every body is in deep mourning. Howsomever, I have seen but little, and that only in a manner from the window; but I could not miss the opportunity of a frank that Andrew has got; and as he's waiting for the pen, you must excuse haste. From your sincere friend,

JANET PRINGLE.

LETTER VII.

Andrew Pringle, Esq. to the Rev. Charles Snodgrass.

London.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It will give you pleasure to hear that my father is likely to get his business speedily settled without any equivocation; and that all those prudential considerations which brought us to London were but the fantasms of our own inexperience. I use the plural, for I really share in the shame of having called in question the high character of the agents: it ought to have been warrentry enough that every thing would

be fairly adjusted. But I must give you some account of what has taken place, to illustrate our provincialism, and to give you some idea of the way of doing business in London.

After having recovered from the effects, and repaired some of the accidents of our voyage, we yesterday morning sallied forth, the doctor, my mother, and your humble servant, in a hackney coach, to Broad Street, where the agents have their counting-house, and were ushered into a room among other legatees or clients, waiting for an audience of Mr Argent, the principal of the house.

I know not how it is that the little personal peculiarities, so amusing to strangers, should be painful when we see them in those whom we love and esteem; but I own to you, that there was a something in the demeanour of the old folks on this occasion, that would have been exceedingly diverting to me, had my filial reverence been less sincere for them.

The establishment of Messrs Argent and Company is of vast extent, and has in it something even of a public magnitude; the number of the clerks, the assiduity of all, and the order that obviously prevails throughout, give, at the first sight, an impression that bespeaks respect for the stability and integrity of the concern. When we had been seated about ten minutes, and my father's name taken to Mr Argent, an answer was brought, that he would see us as soon as possible; but we were obliged to wait at least half an hour more. Upon our being at last admitted, Mr Argent received us standing, and in an easy gentlemanly manner said to my father, "You are the residuary legatee of the late Colonel Armour.—I am sorry that you did not apprize me of this visit, that I might have been prepared to give the information you naturally desire; but if you will call here to-morrow at twelve o'clock, I shall then be able to satisfy you on the subject. Your lady, I presume?" he added, turning to my mother: "Mrs Argent will have the honour of waiting on you; may I therefore beg the favour of your address?" Fortunately I was provided with cards, and having given him one, we found ourselves constrained, as it were, to take our leave. The whole interview did not last two minutes, and I never was less satisfied with myself. The doctor and my mother were in the

greatest anguish ; and, when we were again seated in the coach, loudly expressed their apprehensions. They were convinced that some stratagem was meditated ; they feared that their journey to London would prove as little satisfactory as that of the Wrongheads, and that they had been throwing away good money in building castles in the air.

It had been previously arranged that we were to return for my sister, and afterwards visit some of the sights ; but the clouded visages of her father and mother darkened the very spirit of Rachel, and she largely shared in their fears. This, however, was not the gravest part of the business ; for, instead of going to St Paul's and the Tower, as we had intended, my mother declared, that not one farthing would they spend more till they were satisfied that the expenses already incurred were likely to be reimbursed ; and a Chancery suit, with all the horrors of wig and gown, floated in spectral haziness before their imagination.

We sat down to a frugal meal ; and although the remainder of a bottle of wine, saved from the preceding day, hardly afforded a glass a piece, the doctor absolutely prohibited me from opening another.

This morning, faithful to the hour, we were again in Broad Street, with hearts knit up into the most peremptory courage ; and, on being announced, were immediately admitted to Mr Argent. He received us with the same ease as in the first interview, and, after requesting us to be seated, (which, by the way, he did not do yesterday, a circumstance that was ominously remarked,) he began to talk on indifferent matters. I could see that a question, big with law and fortune, was gathering in the breasts both of the doctor and my mother, and that they were in a state far from that of the blessed. But one of the clerks, before they had time to express their indignant suspicions, entered with a paper, and Mr Argent, having glanced it over, said to the doctor :—" I congratulate you, sir, on the amount of the colonel's fortune. I was not, indeed, aware before that he had died so rich. He has left about £120,000 ; seventy-five thousand of which is in the five per cents ; the remainder in India bonds and other securities. The legacies appear to be inconsiderable, so that the residue to you, after paying them and

the expenses of Doctors' Commons, will exceed a hundred thousand pounds.

My father turned his eyes upwards in thankfulness. "But," continued Mr Argent, "before the property can be transferred, it will be necessary for you to provide about four thousand pounds to pay the duty and other requisite expenses." This was a thunder-clap. "Where can I get such a sum?" exclaimed my father, in a tone of pathetic simplicity. Mr Argent smiled and said, "We shall manage that for you:" and having in the same moment pulled a bell, a fine young man entered, whom he introduced to us as his son, and desired him to explain what steps it was necessary for the doctor to take. We accordingly followed Mr Charles Argent to his own room.

Thus, in less time than I have been in writing it, were we put in possession of all the information we required, and found those whom we feared might be interested to withhold the settlement, alert and prompt to assist us.

Mr Charles Argent is naturally more familiar than his father. He has a little dash of pleasantry in his manner, with a shrewd good-humoured fashionable air, that renders him soon an agreeable acquaintance. He entered with singular felicity at once into the character of the doctor and my mother, and waggishly drolled, as if he did not understand them, in order, I could perceive, to draw out the simplicity of their apprehensions. He quite won the old lady's economical heart, by offering to frank her letters, for he is in Parliament. "You have probably," said he slyly, "friends in the country, to whom you may be desirous of communicating the result of your journey to London: send your letters to me, and I will forward them, and any that you expect may also come under cover to my address, for postage is very expensive."

As we were taking our leave, after being fully instructed in all the preliminary steps to be taken before the transfers of the funded property can be made, he asked me, in a friendly manner, to dine with him this evening, and I never accepted an invitation with more pleasure. I consider his acquaintance a most agreeable acquisition, and not one of the least of those advantages which this new opulence has put it in my power to

attain. The incidents, indeed, of this day, have been all highly gratifying, and the new and brighter phase in which I have seen the mercantile character, as it is connected with the greatness and glory of my country—is in itself equivalent to an accession of useful knowledge. I can no longer wonder at the vast power which the British Government wielded during the late war, when I reflect that the method and promptitude of the house of Messrs Argent and Company is common to all the great commercial concerns from which the statesmen derived, as from so many reservoirs, those immense pecuniary supplies, which enabled them to beggar all the resources of a political despotism, the most unbounded, both in power and principle, of any tyranny that ever existed so long.—Yours, &c.,

ANDREW PRINGLE.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TOWN.

THERE was a great tea-drinking held in the Kirkgate of Irvine, at the house of Miss Mally Glencairn; and at that assemblage of rank, beauty, and fashion, among other delicacies of the season, several new come-home Clyde skippers, roaring from Greenock and Port-Glasgow, were served up—but nothing contributed more to the entertainment of the evening than a proposal, on the part of Miss Mally, that those present who had received letters from the Pringles should read them for the benefit of the company. This was, no doubt, a preconcerted scheme between her and Miss Isabella Todd, to hear what Mr Andrew Pringle had said to his friend Mr Snodgrass, and likewise what the doctor himself had indited to Mr Micklewham; some rumour having spread of the wonderful escapes and adventures of the family in their journey and voyage to London. Had there not been some prethought of this kind, it was not indeed probable, that both the helper and session-clerk of Garnock could have

been there together, in a party, where it was an understood thing, that not only whist and catch honours were to be played, but even obstreperous birky itself, for the diversion of such of the company as were not used to gambling games. It was in consequence of what took place at this Irvine route, that we were originally led to think of collecting the letters.

LETTER VIII.

Miss Rachel Pringle to Miss Isabella Todd.

London.

MY DEAR BELL,—It was my heartfelt intention to keep a regular journal of all our proceedings, from the sad day on which I bade a long adieu to my native shades—and I persevered with a constancy becoming our dear and youthful friendship, in writing down every thing that I saw, either rare or beautiful, till the hour of our departure from Leith. In that faithful register of my feelings and reflections as a traveller, I described our embarkation at Greenock, on board the steam-boat—our sailing past Port-Glasgow, an insignificant town, with a steeple;—the stupendous rock of Dumbarton Castle, that Gibraltar of antiquity;—our landing at Glasgow;—my astonishment at the magnificence of that opulent metropolis of the muslin manufacturers; my brother's remark, that the punchbowls on the roofs of the Infirmary, the Museum, and the Trades' Hall, were emblematic of the universal estimation in which that celebrated mixture is held by all ranks and degrees—learned, commercial, and even medical, of the inhabitants;—our arrival at Edinburgh—my emotion on beholding the Castle, and the visionary lake which may be nightly seen from the windows of Prince's Street, between the Old and New Town, reflecting the lights of the lofty city beyond—with a thousand other delightful and romantic circumstances, which render it no longer surprizing that the Edinburgh folk should be, as they think themselves, the most accomplished people in the world. But, alas! from the moment I placed my foot on board that cruel vessel, of which the very idea is anguish, all thoughts were swallowed up in suffering—

swallowed, did I say? Ah, my dear Bell, it was the odious reverse—but imagination alone can do justice to the subject. Not, however, to dwell on what is past, during the whole time of our passage from Leith, I was unable to think, far less to write; and, although there was a handsome young hussar officer also a passenger, I could not even listen to the elegant compliments which he seemed disposed to offer by way of consolation, when he had got the better of his own sickness. Neither love nor valour can withstand the influence of that sea-demon. The interruption thus occasioned to my observations made me destroy my journal, and I have now to write to you only about London—only about London! What an expression for this human universe, as my brother calls it, as if my weak feminine pen were equal to the stupendous theme!

But, before entering on the subject, let me first satisfy the anxiety of your faithful bosom with respect to my father's legacy. All the accounts, I am happy to tell you, are likely to be amicably settled; but the exact amount is not known as yet, only I can see, by my brother's manner, that it is not less than we expected, and my mother speaks about sending me to a boarding-school to learn accomplishments. Nothing, however, is to be done until something is actually in hand. But what does it all avail to me?—Here am I, a solitary being in the midst of this wilderness of mankind, far from your sympathizing affection, with the dismal prospect before me of going a second time to school, and without the prospect of enjoying, with my own sweet companions, that light and bounding gaiety we were wont to share, in skipping from tomb to tomb in the breezy churchyard of Irvine, like butterflies in spring flying from flower to flower, as a Wordsworth or a Wilson would express it.

We have got elegant lodgings at present in Norfolk Street; but my brother is trying, with all his address, to get us removed to a more fashionable part of the town, which, if the accounts were once settled, I think will take place; and he proposes to hire a carriage for a whole month. Indeed, he has given hints about the saving that might be made by buying one of our own, but my mother shakes her head, and says, "Andrew, dinna be carri't." From all which it is very plain, though they don't

allow me to know their secrets, that the legacy is worth the coming for. But to return to the lodgings;—we have what is called a first and second floor, a drawing-room, and three handsome bed-chambers. The drawing-room is very elegant; and the carpet is the exact same pattern of the one in the dress drawing-room of Eglintoun Castle. Our landlady is indeed a lady, and I am surprized how she should think of letting lodgings, for she dresses better, and wears finer lace, than ever I saw in Irvine. But I am interrupted.—

I now resume my pen.—We have just had a call from Mrs and Miss Argent, the wife and daughter of the colonel's man of business. They seem great people, and came in their own chariot, with two grand footmen behind; but they are pleasant and easy, and the object of their visit was to invite us to a family dinner to-morrow, Sunday. I hope we may become better acquainted; but the two livery servants make such a difference in our degrees, that I fear this is a vain expectation. Miss Argent was, however, very frank, and told me that she was herself only just come to London for the first time since she was a child, having been for the last seven years at a school in the country. I shall, however, be better able to say more about her in my next letter. Do not, however, be afraid that she shall ever supplant you in my heart. No, my dear friend, companion of my days of innocence—that can never be. But this call from such persons of fashion looks as if the legacy had given us some consideration; so that I think my father and mother may as well let me know at once what my prospects are, that I might show you how disinterestedly and truly I am, my dear Bell, yours,

RACHEL PRINGLE.

When Miss Isabella Todd had read the letter, there was a solemn pause for some time—all present knew something, more or less, of the fair writer; but a carriage, a carpet like the best at Eglintoun, a hussar officer, and two footmen in livery, were phantoms of such high import, that no one could distinctly express the feelings with which the intelligence affected them. It was, however, unanimously agreed, that the doctor's legacy

had every symptom of being equal to what it was at first expected to be, namely, twenty thousand pounds ;—a sum which, by some occult or recondite moral influence of the Lottery, is the common maximum, in popular estimation, of any extraordinary and indefinite windfall of fortune. Miss Becky Glibbans, from the purest motives of charity, devoutly wished that poor Rachel might be able to carry her full cup with a steady hand ; and the Rev. Mr Snodgrass, that so commendable an expression might not lose its edifying effect, by any lighter talk, requested Mr Micklewham to read his letter from the doctor

LETTER IX.

The Rev. Z. Pringle, D. D., to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster and Session-clerk of Garnock.

London

DEAR SIR,—I have written by the post that will take this to hand, a letter to Banker M*****y, at Irvine, concerning some small matters of money that I may stand in need of his opinion anent ; and as there is a prospect now of a settlement of the legacy business, I wish you to take a step over to the banker, and he will give you ten pounds, which you will administer to the poor, by putting a twenty-shilling note in the plate on Sunday, as a public testimony from me of thankfulness for the hope that is before us ; the other nine pounds you will quietly, and in your own canny way, divide after the following manner, letting none of the partakers thereof know from what other hand than the Lord's the help comes ; for, indeed, from whom but His does any good befall us ?

You will give to auld Mizy Eccles ten shillings. She's a careful creature, and it will go as far with her thrift as twenty will do with Effy Hopkirk ; so you will give Effy twenty. Mrs Binnacle, who lost her husband, the sailor, last winter, is, I am sure, with her two sickly bairns, very ill off ; I would therefore like if you will lend her a note, and ye may put half-a-crown in the hand of each of the poor weans for a playock, for she's a proud spirit, and will bear much before she complain. Thomas Dowy

has been long unable to do a turn of work, so you may give him a note too. I promised that donsie body, Willy Shachle, the betheral, that when I got my legacy he should get a guinea, which would be more to him than if the colonel had died at home, and he had had the howking of his grave; you may, therefore, in the mean time, give Willy a crown, and be sure to warn him well no to get fou with it, for I'll be very angry if he does. But what in this matter will need all your skill, is the giving of the remaining five pounds to auld Miss Betty Peerie; being a gentlewoman both by blood and education, she's a very slimmer affair to handle in a doing of this kind. But I am persuaded she's in as great necessity as many that seem far poorer, especially since the muslin flowering has gone so down. Her bits of brats are sairly worn, though she keeps out an apparition of gentility. Now, for all this trouble, I will give you an account of what we have been doing since my last.

When we had gotten ourselves made up in order, we went, with Andrew Pringle, my son, to the counting-house, and had a satisfactory visie of the residue; but it will be some time before things can be settled—indeed, I fear, not for months to come—so that I have been thinking, if the parish was pleased with Mr Snodgrass, it might be my duty to my people to give up to him my stipend, and let him be appointed not only helper, but successor likewise. It would not be right of me to give the manse, both because he's a young and inexperienced man, and cannot, in the course of nature, have got into the way of visiting the sick-beds of the frail, which is the main part of a pastor's duty, and likewise, because I wish to die as I have lived, among my people. But, when all's settled, I will know better what to do.

When we had got an inkling from Mr Argent of what the colonel has left—and I do assure you that money is not to be got, even in the way of legacy, without anxiety—Mrs Pringle and I consulted together, and resolved that it was our first duty, as a token of our gratitude to the Giver of all good, to make our first outlay to the poor. So, without saying a word either to Rachel or to Andrew Pringle, my son, knowing that there was a daily worship in the Church of England, we slipped out

of the house by ourselves, and, hiring a hackney conveyance, told the driver thereof to drive us to the high church of St Paul's. This was out of no respect to the pomp and pride of prelacy, but to Him before whom both pope and presbyter are equal, as they are seen through the merits of Christ Jesus. We had taken a gold guinea in our hand, but there was no broad at the door; and instead of a venerable elder, lending sanctity to his office by reason of his age, such as we see in the effectual institutions of our own national church, the door was kept by a young man, much more like a writer's whipper-snapper clerk, than one qualified to fill that station, which good King David would have preferred to dwelling in tents of sin. However, we were not come to spy the nakedness of the land; so we went up the outside stairs, and I asked at him for the plate; "Plate!" say's he, "why, it's on the altar!" I should have known this—the custom of old being to lay the offerings on the altar—but I had forgot; such is the force, you see, of habit, that the Church of England is not so well reformed and purged as ours is from the abominations of the leaven of idolatry. We were then stepping forward, when he said to me, as sharply as if I was going to take an advantage, "You must pay here."—"Very well wherever it is customary," said I, in a meek manner, and gave him the guinea. Mrs Pringle did the same. "I cannot give you change," cried he, with as little decorum as if we had been paying at a playhouse. "It makes no odds," said I; "keep it all." Whereupon he was so converted by the mammon of iniquity, that he could not be civil enough, he thought, but conducted us in, and showed us the marble monuments, and the French colours that were taken in the war, till the time of worship. Nothing could surpass his discretion.

At last the organ began to sound, and we went into the place of worship; but oh, Mr Micklewham, yon is a thin kirk! There was not a hearer forby Mrs Pringle and me, saving and excepting the relics of popery that assisted at the service. What was said, I must, however, in verity confess, was not far from the point. But it's still a comfort to see that prelatical usurpations are on the downfall. No wonder that there is no broad at the door to receive the collection for the poor, when no congregation

entereth in. You may therefore tell Mr Craig, and it will gladden his heart to hear the tidings, that the great Babylonian madam is now, indeed, but a very little cutty.

On our return home to our lodgings, we found Andrew Pringle, my son, and Rachel, in great consternation about our absence. When we told them that we had been at worship, I saw they were both deeply affected ; and I was pleased with my children, the more so, as you know I have had my doubts that Andrew Pringle's principles have not been strengthened by the reading of the Edinburgh Review. Nothing more passed at that time, for we were disturbed by a Captain Sabre that came up with us in the smack, calling to see how we were after our journey ; and as he was a civil well-bred young man, which I marvel at, considering he's a hussar dragoon, we took a coach, and went to see the lions, as he said ; but instead of taking us to the Tower of London, as I expected, he ordered the man to drive us round the town. In our way through the city he showed us the Temple Bar, where Lord Kilmarnock's head was placed after the rebellion, and pointed out the Bank of England and Royal Exchange. He said the steeple of the Exchange was taken down shortly ago, and that the late improvements at the Bank were very grand. I remembered having read in the Edinburgh Advertiser, some years past, that there was a great deal said in Parliament about the state of the Exchange, and the condition of the Bank, which I could never thoroughly understand. And, no doubt, the taking down of an old building, and the building up of a new one so near together, must, in such a crowded city as this, be not only a great detriment to business, but dangerous to the community at large.

After we had driven about for more than two hours, and neither seen lions nor any other curiosity, but only the outside of houses, we returned home, where we found a copperplate card left by Mr Argent, the colonel's agent, with the name of his private dwelling-house. Both me and Mrs Pringle were confounded at the sight of this thing, and could not but think that it prognosticated no good ; for we had seen the gentleman himself in the forenoon. Andrew Pringle, my son, could give no satisfactory reason for such an extraordinary manifestation of

anxiety to see us ; so that, after sitting on thorns at our dinner, I thought that we should see to the bottom of the business. Accordingly, a hackney was summoned to the door, and me and Andrew Pringle, my son, got into it, and told the man to drive to second in the street where Mr Argent lived, and which was the number of his house. The man got up, and away we went ; but after he had driven an awful time, and stopping and enquiring at different places, he said there was no such house as Second's in the street ; whereupon Andrew Pringle, my son, asked him what he meant, and the man said, that he supposed it was one Second's hotel or coffeehouse that we wanted. Now, only think of the craftiness of the ne'er-do-weel : it was with some difficulty that I could get him to understand, that second was just as good as number two ; for Andrew Pringle, my son, would not interfere, but lay back in the coach, and was like to split his sides at my confabulating with the hackneyman. At long and length we got to the house, and were admitted to Mr Argent, who was sitting by himself in his library reading, with a plate of oranges, and two decanters with wine before him. I explained to him, as well as I could, my surprize and anxiety at seeing his card, at which he smiled, and said, it was merely a sort of practice that had come into fashion of late years ; and that, although we had been at his counting-house in the morning, he considered it requisite that he should call on his return from the city. I made the best excuse I could for the mistake ; and the servant having placed glasses on the table, we were invited to take wine. But I was grieved to think that so respectable a man should have had the bottles before him by himself, the more especially as he said his wife and daughters had gone to a party, and that he did not much like such sort of things. But for all that, we found him a wonderful conversible man ; and Andrew Pringle, my son, having read all the new books put out at Edinburgh, could speak with him on any subject. In the course of conversation they touched upon politick economy ; and Andrew Pringle, my son, in speaking about cash in the Bank of England, told him what I had said concerning the alterations of the Royal Exchange steeple, with which Mr Argent seemed greatly pleased, and jocosely proposed as a toast—" May the country never suffer

more from the alterations in the Exchange, than the taking down of the steeple." But as Mrs Pringle is wanting to send a bit line under the same frank to her cousin, Miss Mally Glencairn, I must draw to a conclusion, assuring you that I am, dear sir, your sincere friend and pastor,

ZACHARIAH PRINGLE.

The impression which this letter made on the auditors of Mr Micklewham was highly favourable to the doctor—all bore testimony to his benevolence and piety; and Mrs Glibbans expressed, in very loquacious terms, her satisfaction at the neglect to which prelacy was consigned. The only person who seemed to be affected by other than the most sedate feelings on the occasion was the Rev. Mr Snodgrass, who was observed to smile in a very unbecoming manner at some parts of the doctor's account of his reception at St Paul's. Indeed, it was apparently with the utmost difficulty that the young clergyman could restrain himself from giving liberty to his risible faculties. It is really surprizing how differently the same thing affects different people. "The doctor and Mrs Pringle giving a guinea at the door of St Paul's for the poor, need not make folk laugh," said Mrs Glibbans; "for is it not written, that whosoever giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord?"—"True, my dear Madam," replied Mr Snodgrass, "but the Lord, to whom our friends in this case gave their money, is the Lord Bishop of London; all the collection made at the doors of St Paul's cathedral is, I understand, a perquisite of the bishop's." In this the reverend gentleman was not very correctly informed; for, in the first place, it is not a collection, but an exaction; and, in the second place, it is only sanctioned by the bishop, who allows the inferior clergy to share the gains among themselves. Mrs Glibbans, however, on hearing his explanation, exclaimed, "Gude be about us!" and pushing back her chair with a bounce, streaking down her gown at the same time with both her hands, added, "No wonder that a judgment is upon the land, when we hear of money-changers in the temple." Miss Mally Glencairn, to appease her gathering wrath and holy indignation, said, facetiously, "Na, na, Mrs Glibbans, ye forget there was nae changing

of money there. The man took the whole guineas. But, not to make a controversy on the subject, Mr Snodgrass will now let us hear what Andrew Pringle, 'my son,' has said to him:—"And the reverend gentleman read the following letter with due circumspection, and in his best manner:—

LETTER X.

Andrew Pringle, Esq., to the Reverend Charles Snodgrass.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have heard it alleged, as the observation of a great traveller, that the manners of the higher classes of society throughout Christendom are so much alike, that national peculiarities among them are scarcely perceptible. This is not correct; the differences between those of London and Edinburgh are to me very striking. It is not that they talk and perform the little etiquettes of social intercourse differently; for in these respects they are apparently as similar as it is possible for imitation to make them; but the difference to which I refer is an indescribable something, which can only be compared to peculiarities of accent. They both speak the same language; perhaps in classical purity of phraseology the fashionable Scotchman is even superior to the Englishman; but there is a flatness of tone in his accent—a lack of what the musicians call expression—which gives a local and provincial effect to his conversation, however in other respects learned and intelligent. It is so with his manners; he conducts himself with equal ease, self-possession, and discernment, but the flavour of the metropolitan style is wanting.

I have been led to make these remarks by what I noticed in the guests whom I met on Friday at young Argent's. It was a small party, only five strangers; but they seemed to be all particular friends of our host, and yet none of them appeared to be on any terms of intimacy with each other. In Edinburgh, such a party would have been at first a little cold; each of the guests would there have paused to estimate the characters of the several strangers before committing himself with any topic of conversation. But here, the circumstance of being brought together

by a mutual friend, produced at once the purest gentlemanly confidence; each, as it were, took it for granted that the persons whom he had come among were men of education and good-breeding; and, without deeming it at all necessary that he should know something of their respective political and philosophical principles, before venturing to speak on such subjects, discussed frankly, and as things unconnected with party feelings, incidental occurrences which, in Edinburgh, would have been avoided as calculated to awaken animosities.

But the most remarkable feature of the company, small as it was, consisted of the difference in the condition and character of the guests. In Edinburgh, the landlord, with the scrupulous care of a herald or genealogist, would, for a party previously unacquainted with each other, have chosen his guests as nearly as possible from the same rank of life; the London host had paid no respect to any such consideration—all the strangers were as dissimilar in fortune, profession, connexions, and politics, as any four men in the class of gentlemen could well be. I never spent a more delightful evening.

The ablest, the most eloquent, and the most elegant man present, without question, was the son of a saddler. No expense had been spared on his education. His father, proud of his talents, had intended him for a seat in Parliament; but Mr T—— himself prefers the easy enjoyments of private life, and has kept himself aloof from politics and parties. Were I to form an estimate of his qualifications to excel in public speaking, by the clearness and beautiful propriety of his colloquial language, I should conclude that he was still destined to perform a distinguished part. But he is content with the liberty of a private station, as a spectator only, and, perhaps, in that he shows his wisdom: for, undoubtedly, such men are not cordially received among hereditary statesmen, unless they evince a certain suppleness of principle, such as we have seen in the conduct of more than one political adventurer.

The next in point of effect was young C—— G——. He evidently languished under the influence of indisposition, which, while it added to the natural gentleness of his manners, diminished the impression his accomplishments would otherwise

have made. I was greatly struck with the modesty with which he offered his opinions, and could scarcely credit that he was the same individual whose eloquence in Parliament is by many compared even to Mr Canning's, and whose firmness of principle is so universally acknowledged, that no one ever suspects him of being liable to change. You may have heard of his poem "On the Restoration of Learning in the East," the most magnificent prize essay that the English Universities have produced for many years. The passage in which he describes the talents, the researches, and learning of Sir William Jones, is worthy of the imagination of Burke; and yet, with all this oriental splendour of fancy, he has the reputation of being a patient and methodical man of business. He looks, however, much more like a poet or a student, than an orator and a statesman; and were statesmen the sort of personages which the spirit of the age attempts to represent them, I, for one, should lament that a young man, possessed of so many amiable qualities, all so tinted with the bright lights of a fine enthusiasm, should ever have been removed from the moon-lighted groves and peaceful cloisters of Magdalen College, to the lamp-smelling passages and factious debates of St Stephen's Chapel. Mr G. certainly belongs to that high class of gifted men, who, to the honour of the age, have redeemed the literary character from the charge of unfitness for the concerns of public business; and he has shown that talents for affairs of state, connected with literary predilections, are not limited to mere reviewers, as some of your old class-fellows would have the world to believe. When I contrast the quiet unobtrusive development of Mr G.'s character, with that bustling and obstreperous elbowing into notice of some of those to whom the Edinburgh Review owes half its fame, and compare the pure and steady lustre of his elevation, to the rocket-like aberrations and perturbed blaze of their still uncertain course, I cannot but think that we have overrated, if not their ability, at least their wisdom in the management of public affairs.

The third of the party was a little Yorkshire baronet. He was formerly in Parliament, but left it, as he says, on account of its irregularities, and the bad hours it kept. He is a Whig, I under-

stand, in politics, and indeed one might guess as much by looking at him; for I have always remarked, that your Whigs have something odd and particular about them. On making the same sort of remark to Argent, who, by the way, is a high ministerial man, he observed, the thing was not to be wondered at, considering that the Whigs are exceptions to the generality of mankind, which naturally accounts for their being always in the minority. Mr T——, the saddler's son, who overheard us, said slyly, "That it might be so; but if it be true that the wise are few compared to the multitude of the foolish, things would be better managed by the minority than as they are at present."

The fourth guest was a stockbroker, a shrewd compound, with all charity be it spoken, of knavery and humour. He is by profession an epicure, but I suspect his accomplishments in that capacity are not very well founded: I would almost say, judging by the evident traces of craft and dissimulation in his physiognomy, that they have been assumed as part of the means of getting into good company, to drive the more earnest trade of money-making. Argent evidently understood his true character, though he treated him with jocular familiarity. I thought it a fine example of the intellectual tact and superiority of T——, that he seemed to view him with dislike and contempt. But I must not give you my reasons for so thinking, as you set no value on my own particular philosophy; besides, my paper tells me that I have only room left to say, that it would be difficult in Edinburgh to bring such a party together; and yet they affect there to have a metropolitan character. In saying this, I mean only with reference to manners; the methods of behaviour in each of the company were precisely similar—there was no eccentricity, but only that distinct and decided individuality which nature gives, and which no acquired habits can change. Each, however, was the representative of a class; and Edinburgh has no classes exactly of the same kind as those to which they belonged.—Yours truly,

ANDREW PRINGLE.

Just as Mr Snodgrass concluded the last sentence, one of the

Clyde skippers, who had fallen asleep, gave such an extravagant snore, followed by a groan, that it set the whole company a laughing, and interrupted the critical strictures which would otherwise have been made on Mr Andrew Pringle's epistle. "Damn it," said he, "I thought myself in a fog, and could not tell whether the land a-head was Plada or the Lady Isle." Some of the company thought the observation not inapplicable to what they had been hearing.

Miss Isabella Todd then begged that Miss Mally, their hostess, would favour the company with Mrs Pringle's communication. To this request that considerate maiden ornament of the Kirkgate deemed it necessary, by way of preface to the letter, to say, "Ye a' ken that Mrs Pringle's a managing woman, and ye maunna expect any metaphysical philosophy from her." In the mean time, having taken the letter from her pocket, and placed her spectacles on that functionary of the face which was destined to wear spectacles, she began as follows:—

LETTER XI.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Mally Glencairn.

MY DEAR MISS MALLY,—We have been at the counting-house, and gotten a sort of a satisfaction: what the upshot may be, I canna take it upon myself to prognosticate; but when the waur comes to the worst, I think that baith Rachel and Andrew will have a nest-egg, and the doctor and me may sleep sound on their account, if the nation does na break, as the arglebarglers in the House of Parliament have been threatening: for all the cornal's fortune is sunk at present in the pesents. Howsomever, it's our notion, when the legacies are paid off, to lift the money out of the funds, and place it at good interest on hairetable securitie. But ye will hear aften from us, before things come to that; for the delays, and the goings, and the comings in this town of London, are past all expreshon.

As yet, we have been to see no fairlies, except going in a coach from one part of the town to another; but the doctor and me was at the he-kirk of Saint Paul's for a purpose that I need

not tell you, as it was a doing with the right hand what the left should not know. I couldna say that I had there great pleasure; for the preacher was very cauldribe, and read every word, and then there was such a beggary of popish prelacy, that it was compassionate to a Christian to see.

We are to dine at Mr Argent's, the cornal's hadgint, on Sunday, and me and Rachel have been getting something for the okasion. Our landlady, Mrs Sharkly, has recommended us to ane of the most fashionable millinders in London, who keeps a grand shop in Cranburn Alla, and she has brought us arteecles to look at; but I was surprized they were not finer, for I thought them of a very inferior quality, which she said was because they were not made for no costomer, but for the public.

The Argents seem as if they would be discreet people, which, to us who are here in the jaws of jeopardy, would be a great comfort—for I am no overly satisfieed with many things. What would ye think of buying coals by the stimpert, for any thing that I know, and then setting up the poker afore the ribs, instead of blowing with the bellies to make the fire burn? I was of a pinion that the Englishers were naturally wasterful; but I can ashure you this is no the case at all—and I am beginning to think that the way of leeving from hand to mouth is great frugality, when ye consider that all is left in the logive hands of uncercumseezed servans.

But what gives me the most concern at this time is one Captain Sabre of the Dragoon Hozars, who come up in the smak with us from Leith, and is looking more after our Rachel than I could wish, now that she might set her cap to another sort of object. But he's of a respectit family, and the young lad himself is no to be despid; howsomever, I never likit officir-men of any description, and yet the thing that makes me look down on the captain is all owing to the cornal, who was an officer of the native poors of India, where the pay must indeed have been extraordinar, for who ever heard either of a cornal, or any officer whomsoever, making a hundred thousand pounds in our regiments? no that I say the cornal has left so meikle to us.

Tell Mrs Glibbans that I have not heard of no sound preacher as yet in London—the want of which is no doubt the great

cause of the crying sins of the place. What would she think to hear of newspapers selling by tout of horn on the Lord's day? and on the Sabbath night the change-houses are more throng than on the Saturday! I am told, but as yet I cannot say that I have seen the evil myself with my own eyes, that in the summer time there are tea-gardens, where the tradesmen go to smoke their pipes of tobacco, and to entertain their wives and children, which can be nothing less than a bringing of them to an untimely end. But you will be surprized to hear, that no such thing as whusky is to be had in the public-houses, where they drink only a dead sort of beer; and that a bottle of true jennyinn London porter is rarely to be seen in the whole town—all kinds of piple getting their porter in pewter cans, and a laddie calls for in the morning to take away what has been yoused over-night. But what I most miss is the want of creem. The milk here is just skimm, and, I doot not, likewise well watered—as for the water, a drink of clear wholesome good water is not within the bounds of London; and truly, now may I say, that I have learnt what the blessing of a cup of cold water is.

Tell Miss Nanny Eydent, that the day of the burial is now settled, when we are going to Windsor Castle to see the precession—and that, by the end of the wick, she may expect the fashions from me, with all the particulars. Till then, I am, my dear Miss Mally, your friend and well-wisher,

JANET PRINGLE.

Noto Beny.—Give my kind compliments to Mrs Glibbans, and let her know that I will, after Sunday, give her an account of the state of the gospel in London.

Miss Mally paused when she had read the letter, and it was unanimously agreed that Mrs Pringle gave a more full account of London than either father, son, or daughter.

By this time the night was far advanced, and Mrs Glibbans was rising to go away, apprehensive, as she observed, that they were going to bring "the carts" into the room. Upon Miss Mally, however, assuring her, that no such transgression was meditated, but that she intended to treat them with a bit nice

Highland mutton ham, and eggs of her own laying, that worthy pillar of the Relief Kirk consented to remain.

It was past eleven o'clock when the party broke up; Mr Snodgrass and Mr Micklewham walked home together, and as they were crossing the Red Burn Bridge, at the entrance of Eglintoun Wood—a place well noted from ancient times for preternatural appearances—Mr Micklewham declared, that he thought he heard something purring among the bushes; upon which Mr Snodgrass made a jocosé observation, stating, that it could be nothing but the effect of Lord North's strong ale in his head; and we should add, by way of explanation, that the Lord North here spoken of was Willy Grieve, celebrated in Irvine for the strength and flavour of his brewing; and that, in addition to a plentiful supply of his best, Miss Mally had entertained them with tamarind punch, constituting a natural cause adequate to produce all the preternatural purring that terrified the dominie.

CHAPTER V.

THE ROYAL FUNERAL.

TAM GLEN having, in consequence of the exhortations of Mr Micklewham, and the earnest entreaties of Mr Daff, backed by the pious animadversions of the rigidly righteous Mr Craig, confessed a fault, and acknowledged an irregular marriage with Meg Milliken, their child was admitted to church privileges. But before the day of baptism, Mr Daff, who thought Tam had given but sullen symptoms of penitence, said, to put him in better humour with his fate,—“Noo, Tam, since ye hae beguiled us of the infare, we maun mak up for't at the christening; so I'll speak to Mr Snodgrass to bid the doctor's frien's and acquaintance to the ploy, that we may get as meikle amang us as will pay for the bairn's baptismal frock.”

Mr Craig, who was present, and who never lost an opportunity of testifying, as he said, his “discountenance of the crying

iniquity," remonstrated with Mr Daff on the unchristian nature of the proposal, stigmatizing it with good emphasis, "as a sinful nourishing of carnality in his day and generation." Mr Micklewham, however, interfered, and said, "It was a matter of weight and concernment, and therefore it behoves you to consult Mr Snodgrass on the fitness of the thing. For if the thing itself is not fit and proper, it cannot expect his countenance; and, on that account, before we reckon on his compliance with what Mr Daff has propounded, we should first learn whether he approves of it at all." Whereupon the two elders and the session-clerk adjourned to the manse, in which Mr Snodgrass, during the absence of the incumbent, had taken up his abode.

The heads of the previous conversation were recapitulated by Mr Micklewham, with as much brevity as was consistent with perspicuity; and the matter being duly digested by Mr Snodgrass, that orthodox young man—as Mrs Glibbans denominated him on hearing him for the first time—declared that the notion of a pay-christening was a benevolent and kind thought: "For, is not the order to increase and multiply one of the first commands in the Scriptures of truth?" said Mr Snodgrass, addressing himself to Mr Craig. "Surely, then, when children are brought into the world, a great law of our nature has been fulfilled, and there is cause for rejoicing and gladness! And is it not an obligation imposed upon all Christians, to welcome the stranger, and to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked; and what greater stranger can there be than a helpless babe? Who more in need of sustenance than the infant, that knows not the way even to its mother's bosom? And whom shall we clothe, if we do not the wailing innocent, that the hand of Providence places in poverty and nakedness before us, to try, as it were, the depth of our Christian principles, and to awaken the sympathy of our humane feelings?"

Mr Craig replied, "It's a' very true and sound what Mr Snodgrass has observed; but Tam Glen's wean is neither a stranger, nor hungry, nor naked, but a sturdy brat, that has been rinnin' its lane for mair than sax weeks."—"Ah!" said Mr Snodgrass familiarly, "I fear, Mr Craig, ye're a Malthusian in your heart." The sanctimonious elder was thunder-struck

at the word. Of many a various shade and modification of sectarianism he had heard, but the Malthusian heresy was new to his ears, and awful to his conscience; and he begged Mr Snodgrass to tell him in what it chiefly consisted, protesting his innocence of that, and of every erroneous doctrine.

Mr Snodgrass happened to regard the opinions of Malthus on Population as equally contrary to religion and nature, and not at all founded in truth. "It is evident, that the reproductive principle in the earth and vegetables, and all things and animals which constitute the means of subsistence, is much more vigorous than in man. It may be therefore affirmed, that the multiplication of the means of subsistence is an effect of the multiplication of population, for the one is augmented in quantity, by the skill and care of the other," said Mr Snodgrass, seizing with avidity this opportunity of stating what he thought on the subject, although his auditors were but the session-clerk and two elders of a country parish. We cannot pursue the train of his argument; but we should do injustice to the philosophy of Malthus, if we suppressed the observation which Mr Daff made at the conclusion. "Gude safe's!" said the good-natured elder, "if it's true that we breed faster than the Lord provides for us, we maun drown the poor folks' weans like kittlings."—"Na, na!" exclaimed Mr Craig, "ye're a' out, neighbour—I see now the utility of church censures."—"True!" said Mr Micklewham; "and the ordination of the stool of repentance, the horrors of which, in the opinion of the fifteen Lords at Edinburgh, palliated child-murder, is doubtless a Malthusian institution." But Mr Snodgrass put an end to the controversy, by fixing a day for the christening, and telling he would do his best to procure a good collection, according to the benevolent suggestion of Mr Daff. To this cause we are indebted for the next series of the Pringle correspondence; for, on the day appointed, Miss Mally Glencairn, Miss Isabella Todd, Mrs Glibbans and her daughter Becky, with Miss Nanny Eydent, together with other friends of the minister's family, dined at the manse, and the conversation being chiefly about the concerns of the family, the letters were produced and read.

LETTER XII.

Andrew Pringle, Esq., to the Rev. Charles Snodgrass.

Windsor, Castle-Inn.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have all my life been strangely susceptible of pleasing impressions from public spectacles where great crowds are assembled. This, perhaps, you will say, is but another way of confessing that, like the common vulgar, I am fond of sights and shows. It may be so ; but it is not from the pageants that I derive my enjoyment. A multitude, in fact, is to me as it were a strain of music, which, with an irresistible and magical influence, calls up from the unknown abyss of the feelings new combinations of fancy, which, though vague and obscure, as those nebulae of light that astronomers have supposed to be the rudiments of unformed stars, afterwards become distinct and brilliant acquisitions. In a crowd, I am like the somnambulist in the highest degree of the luminous crisis, when it is said a new world is unfolded to his contemplation, wherein all things have an intimate affinity with the state of man, and yet bear no resemblance to the objects that address themselves to his corporeal faculties. This delightful experience, as it may be called, I have enjoyed this evening, to an exquisite degree, at the funeral of the king ; but, although the whole succession of incidents is indelibly imprinted on my recollection, I am still so much affected by the emotion excited, as to be incapable of conveying to you any intelligible description of what I saw. It was indeed a scene witnessed through the medium of the feelings, and the effect partakes of the nature of a dream.

I was within the walls of an ancient castle,

“ So old as if they had for ever stood,
So strong as if they would for ever stand,”

and it was almost midnight. The towers, like the vast spectres of departed ages, raised their embattled heads to the skies, monumental witnesses of the strength and antiquity of a great monarchy. A prodigious multitude filled the courts of that

venerable edifice, surrounding on all sides a dark, embossed structure, the sarcophagus, as it seemed to me at the moment, of the heroism of chivalry.

“A change came o’er the spirit of my dream,” and I beheld the scene suddenly illuminated, and the blaze of torches, the glimmering of arms, and warriors, and horses, while a mosaic of human faces covered like a pavement the courts. A deep low under sound pealed from a distance; in the same moment, a trumpet answered with a single mournful note from the stateliest and darkest portion of the fabric, and it was whispered in every ear, “It is coming.” Then an awful cadence of solemn music, that affected the heart like silence, was heard at intervals, and a numerous retinue of grave and venerable men,

“The fathers of their time,
Those mighty master spirits, that withstood
The fall of monarchies, and high upheld
Their country’s standard, glorious in the storm,

passed slowly before me, bearing the emblems and trophies of a king. They were as a series of great historical events; and I beheld behind them, following and followed, an awful and indistinct image, like the vision of Job. It moved on, and I could not discern the form thereof; but there were honours and heraldries, and sorrow, and silence, and I heard the stir of a profound homage performing within the breasts of all the witnesses.—But I must not indulge myself farther on this subject. I cannot hope to excite in you the emotions with which I was so profoundly affected. In the visible objects of the funeral of George the Third, there was but little magnificence; all its sublimity was derived from the trains of thought and currents of feeling, which the sight of so many illustrious characters, surrounded by circumstances associated with the greatness and antiquity of the kingdom, was necessarily calculated to call forth. In this respect, however, it was perhaps the sublimest spectacle ever witnessed in this island; and I am sure that I cannot live so long as ever again to behold another, that will equally interest me to the same depth and extent.—Yours,

ANDREW PRINGLE.

We should ill perform the part of faithful historians, did we omit to record the sentiments expressed by the company on this occasion. Mrs Glibbans, whose knowledge of the points of orthodoxy had not their equal in the three adjacent parishes, roundly declared, that Mr Andrew Pringle's letter was nothing but a peesemeal of clishmaclavers ; that there was no sense in it ; and that it was just like the writer, a canary idiot, a touch here and a touch there, without any thing in the shape of cordiality or satisfaction.

Miss Isabellâ Todd answered this objection with that sweetness of manner and virgin diffidence, which so well becomes a youthful member of the establishment, controverting the dogmas of a stoop of the Relief persuasion, by saying, that she thought Mr Andrew had shown a fine sensibility. "What is sensibility without judgment," cried her adversary, "but a thrashing in the water and a raising of bells ? Couldna the fallow, without a' his parleyvoos, have said, that such and such was the case, and that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away ?—but his clouds, and his spectres, and his visions of Job !—Oh, an he could but think like Job !—Oh, an he would but think like the patient man !—and was obliged to claut his flesh with a bit of a broken crock, we might have some hope of repentance unto life. But Andrew Pringle, he's a gone dick ; I never had comfort or expectation of the freethinker, since I heard that he was infected with the blue and yellow calamity of the Edinburgh Review ; in which, I am credibly told, it is set forth that women have nae souls, but only a gut, and a gaw, and a gizzard, like a pigeon-dove, or a raven-crow, or any other outcast and abominated quadruped."

Here Miss Mally Glencairn interposed her effectual mediation, and said, "It is very true that Andrew deals in the diplomatics of obscurity ; but it's well known that he has a nerve for genius, and that, in his own way, he kens the loan from the crown of the causey, as well as the duck does the midden from the adle dib." To this proverb, which we never heard before, a learned friend, whom we consulted on the subject, has enabled us to state, that middens were formerly of great magnitude, and often of no less antiquity in the west of Scotland ; in so much, that the Trongate of Glasgow owes all its spacious

grandeur to them. It being within the recollection of persons yet living, that the said magnificent street was at one time an open road, or highway, leading to the Trone, or market-cross, with thatched houses on each side, such as may still be seen in the pure and immaculate royal burgh of Rutherglen; and that before each house stood a luxuriant midden, by the removal of which, in the progress of modern degeneracy, the stately architecture of Argyle Street was formed. But not to insist at too great a length on such topics of antiquarian lore, we shall now insert Dr Pringle's account of the funeral, and which, patly enough, follows our digression concerning the middens and magnificence of Glasgow, as it contains an authentic anecdote of a manufacturer from that city drinking champagne at the King's dregy.

LETTER XIII.

The Rev. Z. Pringle, D.D., to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster and Session-clerk of Garnock.

London.

DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter, and it is a great pleasure to me to hear that my people were all so much concerned at our distress in the Leith smack; but what gave me the most contentment was the repentance of Tam Glen. I hope, poor fellow, he will prove a good husband; but I have my doubts; for the wife has really but a small share of common sense, and no married man can do well unless his wife will let him. I am, however, not overly pleased with Mr Craig on the occasion; for he should have considered frail human nature, and accepted of poor Tam's confession of a fault, and allowed the bairn to be baptized without any more ado. I think honest Mr Daff has acted like himself, and I trust and hope there will be a great gathering at the christening; and, that my mite may not be wanting, you will slip in a guinea-note when the dish goes round, but in such a manner that it may not be jealousied from whose hand it comes.

Since my last letter, we have been very thrang in the way of

seeing the curiosities of London; but I must go on regular, and tell you all, which I think it is my duty to do, that you may let my people know. First, then, we have been at Windsor Castle, to see the king lying in state, and, afterwards, his interment; and sorry am I to say, it was not a sight that could satisfy any godly mind on such an occasion. We went in a coach of our own, by ourselves, and found the town of Windsor like a cried fair. We were then directed to the castle gate, where a terrible crowd was gathered together; and we had not been long in that crowd, till a pocket-picker, as I thought, cutted off the tail of my coat, with my pocket-book in my pocket, which I never missed at the time. But it seems the coat-tail was found, and a policeman got it, and held it up on the end of his stick, and cried—whose pocket is this? showing the book that was therein in his hand. I was confounded to see my pocket-book there, and could scarcely believe my own eyes; but Mrs Pringle knew it at the first glance, and said, "It's my gudeman's;" at the which, there was a great shout of derision among the multitude, and we would baith have then been glad to disown the pocket-book, but it was returned to us, I may almost say, against our will; but the scorers, when they saw our confusion, behaved with great civility towards us, so that we got into the castle-yard with no other damage than the loss of the flap of my coat-tail.

Being in the castle-yard, we followed the crowd into another gate, and up a stair, and saw the king lying in state, which was a very dismal sight—and I thought of Solomon in all his glory, when I saw the coffin, and the mutes, and the mourners; and reflecting on the long infirmity of mind of the good old king, I said to myself, in the words of the book of Job, "Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die even without wisdom!"

When we had seen the sight, we came out of the castle, and went to an inn to get a chack of dinner; but there was such a crowd, that no resting-place could for a time be found for us. Gentle and semple were there, all mingled, and no respect of persons; only there was, at a table nigh unto ours, a fat Glasgow manufacturer, who ordered a bottle of champagne wine, and did all he could, in the drinking of it by himself, to show that

he was a man in well-doing circumstances. While he was talking over his wine, a great peer of the realm, with a star on his breast, came into the room, and ordered a glass of brandy and water; and I could see, when he saw the Glasgow manufacturer drinking champagne wine on that occasion, that he greatly marvelled thereat.

When we had taken our dinner, we went out to walk and see the town of Windsor; but there was such a mob of coaches going and coming, and men and horses, that we left the streets, and went to inspect the king's policy, which is of great compass, but in a careless order, though it costs a world of money to keep it up. Afterwards, we went back to the inns, to get tea for Mrs Pringle and her daughter, while Andrew Pringle, my son, was seeing if he could get tickets to buy, to let us into the inside of the castle, to see the burial—but he came back without luck, and I went out myself, being more experienced in the world, and I saw a gentleman's servant with a ticket in his hand, and I asked him to sell it to me, which the man did with thankfulness for five shillings, although the price was said to be golden guineas. But as this ticket admitted only one person, it was hard to say what should be done with it when I got back to my family. However, as by this time we were all very much fatigued, I gave it to Andrew Pringle, my son, and Mrs Pringle, and her daughter Rachel, agreed to bide with me in the inns.

Andrew Pringle, my son, having got the ticket, left us sitting, when shortly after in came a nobleman, high in the cabinet, as I think he must have been, and he having politely asked leave to take his tea at our table, because of the great throng in the house, we fell into a conversation together, and he, understanding thereby that I was a minister of the Church of Scotland, said he thought he could help us into a place to see the funeral; so, after he had drank his tea, he took us with him, and got us into the castle-yard, where we had an excellent place, near to the Glasgow manufacturer that drank the champagne. The drink by this time, however, had got into that poor man's head, and he talked so loud, and so little to the purpose, that the soldiers who were guarding were obliged to make him hold his peace, at which he was not a little nettled, and told the soldiers

that he had himself been a soldier, and served the king without pay, having been a volunteer officer. But this had no more effect than to make the soldiers laugh at him, which was not a decent thing at the interment of their master, our most gracious sovereign that was.

However, in this situation we saw all; and I can assure you it was a very edifying sight; and the people demeaned themselves with so much propriety, that there was no need for any guards at all: indeed, for that matter, of the two, the guards, who had eaten the king's bread, were the only ones there, saving and excepting the Glasgow manufacturer, that manifested an irreverent spirit towards the royal obsequies. But they are men familiar with the king of terrors on the field of battle, and it was not to be expected that their hearts would be daunted like those of others by a doing of a civil character.

When all was over, we returned to the inns, to get our chaise, to go back to London that night, for beds were not to be had for love or money at Windsor, and we reached our temporary home in Norfolk Street about four o'clock in the morning, well satisfied with what we had seen,—but all the mean time I had forgotten the loss of the flap of my coat, which caused no little sport when I came to recollect what a pookit-like body I must have been, walking about in the king's policy like a peacock without my tail. But I must conclude, for Mrs Pringle has a letter to put in the frank for Miss Nanny Eydent, which you will send to her by one of your scholars, as it contains information that may be serviceable to Miss Nanny in her business, both as a mantua-maker and a superintendent of the genteeler sort of burials at Irvine, and our vicinity.—So that this is all from your friend and pastor,

ZACHARIAH PRINGLE.

“I think,” said Miss Isabella Todd, as Mr Micklewham finished the reading of the doctor's epistle, “that my friend Rachel might have given me some account of the ceremony; but Captain Sabre seems to have been a much more interesting object to her than the pride and pomp to her brother, or even the Glasgow manufacturer to her father.” In saying these

words, the young lady took the following letter from her pocket, and was on the point of beginning to read it, when Miss Becky Glibbans exclaimed, "I had aye my fears that Rachel was but light-headed, and I'll no be surprised to hear more about her and the dragoon or a's done." Mr Snodgrass looked at Becky, as if he had been afflicted at the moment with unpleasant ideas; and perhaps he would have rebuked the spitefulness of her insinuations, had not her mother sharply snubbed the uncongenial maiden, in terms at least as pungent as any which the reverend gentleman would have employed. "I'm sure," replied Miss Becky, pertly, "I meant no ill; but if Rachel Pringle can write about nothing but this Captain Sabre, she might as well let it alone, and her letter canna be worth the hearing."—"Upon that," said the clergyman, "we can form a judgment when we have heard it, and I beg that Miss Isabella may proceed,"—which she did accordingly.

LETTER XIV.

Miss Rachel Pringle to Miss Isabella Todd.

London.

MY DEAR BELL,—I take up my pen with a feeling of disappointment such as I never felt before. Yesterday was the day appointed for the funeral of the good old king, and it was agreed that we should go to Windsor, to pour the tribute of our tears upon the royal hearse. Captain Sabre promised to go with us, as he is well acquainted with the town, and the interesting objects around the castle, so dear to chivalry, and embalmed by the genius of Shakspeare and many a minor bard, and I promised myself a day of unclouded felicity—but the captain was ordered to be on duty—and the crowd was so rude and riotous, that I had no enjoyment whatever; but, pining with chagrin at the little respect paid by the rabble to the virtues of the departed monarch, I would fainly have retired into some solemn and sequestered grove, and breathed my sorrows to the listening waste. Nor was the loss of the captain, to explain and illuminate the different baronial circumstances around the castle, the

only thing I had to regret in this ever-memorable excursion—my tender and affectionate mother was so desirous to see every thing in the most particular manner, in order that she might give an account of the funeral to Nanny Eydent, that she had no mercy either upon me or my father, but obliged us to go with her to the most difficult and inaccessible places. How vain was all this meritorious assiduity! For of what avail can the ceremonies of a royal funeral be to Miss Nanny, at Irvine, where kings never die, and where, if they did, it is not at all probable that Miss Nanny would be employed to direct their solemn obsequies? As for my brother, he was so entranced with his own enthusiasm, that he paid but little attention to us, which made me the more sensible of the want we suffered from the absence of Captain Sabre. In a word, my dear Bell, never did I pass a more unsatisfactory day, and I wish it blotted for ever from my remembrance. Let it therefore be consigned to the abysses of oblivion, while I recall the more pleasing incidents that have happened since I wrote you last.

On Sunday, according to invitation, as I told you, we dined with the Argents, and were entertained by them in a style at once most splendid, and on the most easy footing. I shall not attempt to describe the consumable materials of the table, but call your attention, my dear friend, to the intellectual portion of the entertainment—a subject much more congenial to your delicate and refined character.

Mrs Argent is a lady of considerable personal magnitude, of an open and affable disposition. In this respect, indeed, she bears a striking resemblance to her nephew, Captain Sabre, with whose relationship to her we were unacquainted before that day. She received us as friends in whom she felt a peculiar interest; for when she heard that my mother had got her dress and mine from Cranbury Alley, she expressed the greatest astonishment, and told us, that it was not at all a place where persons of fashion could expect to be properly served. Nor can I disguise the fact, that the flounced and gorgeous garniture of our dresses was in shocking contrast to the amiable simplicity of hers and the fair Arabella, her daughter, a charming girl, who, notwithstanding the fashionable splendour in which she

has been educated, displays a delightful sprightliness of manner, that, I have some notion, has not been altogether lost on the heart of my brother.

When we returned up stairs to the drawing-room, after dinner, Miss Arabella took her harp, and was on the point of favouring us with a Mozart; but her mother, recollecting that we were Presbyterians, thought it might not be agreeable, and she desisted, which I was sinful enough to regret; but my mother was so evidently alarmed at the idea of playing on the harp on a Sunday night, that I suppressed my own wishes, in filial veneration for those of that respected parent. Indeed, fortunate it was that the music was not performed; for, when we returned home, my father remarked with great solemnity, that such a way of passing the Lord's night as we had passed it, would have been a great sin in Scotland.

Captain Sabre, who called on us next morning, was so delighted when he understood that we were acquainted with his aunt, that he lamented he had not happened to know it before, as he would, in that case, have met us there. He is indeed very attentive, but I assure you that I feel no particular interest about him; for although he is certainly a very handsome young man, he is not such a genius as my brother, and has no literary partialities. But literary accomplishments are, you know, foreign to the military profession; and if the captain has not distinguished himself by cutting up authors in the Reviews, he has acquired an honourable medal, by overcoming the enemies of the civilized world at Waterloo.

To-night the playhouses open again, and we are going to the Oratorio, and the captain goes with us—a circumstance which I am the more pleased at, as we are strangers, and he will tell us the names of the performers. My father made some scruple of consenting to be of the party; but when he heard that an oratorio was a concert of sacred music, he thought it would be only a sinless deviation if he did, so he goes likewise. The captain, therefore, takes an early dinner with us at five o'clock.—Alas! to what changes am I doomed—that was the tea hour at the manse of Garnock. Oh, when shall I revisit the primitive simplicities of my native scenes again! But neither time nor distance,

my dear Bell, can change the affection with which I subscribe myself, ever affectionately, yours,

RACHEL PRINGLE.

At the conclusion of this letter, the countenance of Mrs Glibbans was evidently so darkened, that it daunted the company, like an eclipse of the sun, when all nature is saddened. "What think you, Mr Snodgrass," said that spirit-stricken lady—"what think you of this dining on the Lord's day—this playing on the harp; the carnal Mozarting of that ungodly family, with whom the corrupt human nature of our friends has been chambering?" Mr Snodgrass was at some loss for an answer, and hesitated; but Miss Mally Glencairn relieved him from his embarrassment, by remarking that "the harp was a holy instrument," which somewhat troubled the settled orthodoxy of Mrs Glibbans's visage. "Had it been an organ," said Mr Snodgrass, dryly, "there might have been, perhaps, more reason to doubt; but, as Miss Mally justly remarks, the harp has been used from the days of King David in the performances of sacred music, together with the psalter, the timbrel, the sackbut, and the cymbal." The wrath of the polemical Deborah of the Relief-Kirk was somewhat appeased by this explanation, and she enquired in a more diffident tone, whether a Mozart was not a metrical paraphrase of the song of Moses after the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea; "in which case, I must own," she observed, that the sin and guilt of the thing is less grievous in the sight of HIM before whom all the actions of men are abominations." Miss Isabella Todd, availing herself of this break in the conversation, turned round to Miss Nanny Eydent, and begged that she would read her letter from Mrs Pringle. We should do injustice, however, to honest worth and patient industry, were we, in thus introducing Miss Nanny to our readers, not to give them some account of her lowly and virtuous character.

Miss Nanny was the eldest of three sisters, the daughters of a shipmaster, who was lost at sea when they were very young; and his all having perished with him, they were indeed, as their mother said, the children of Poverty and Sorrow. By the help of a little credit, the widow contrived, in a small shop, to eke

out her days till Nanny was able to assist her. It was the intention of the poor woman to take up a girls' school for reading and knitting, and Nanny was destined to instruct the pupils in that higher branch of accomplishment—the different stitches of the sampler. But about the time that Nanny was advancing to the requisite degree of perfection in chain-steek and pie-holes—indeed had made some progress in the Lord's prayer between two yew-trees—tambouring was introduced at Irvine, and Nanny was sent to acquire a competent knowledge of that classic art, honoured by the fair hands of the beautiful Helen and the chaste and domestic Andromache. In this she instructed her sisters; and such was the fruit of their application and constant industry, that her mother abandoned the design of keeping school, and continued to ply her little huxtry in more easy circumstances. The fluctuations of trade in time taught them that it would not be wise to trust to the loom, and accordingly Nanny was at some pains to learn mantua-making; and it was fortunate that she did so—for the tambouring gradually went out of fashion, and the flowering which followed suited less the infirm constitution of poor Nanny. The making of gowns for ordinary occasions led to the making of mournings, and the making of mournings naturally often caused Nanny to be called in at deaths, which, in process of time, promoted her to have the management of burials; and in this line of business she has now a large proportion of the genteelst in Irvine and its vicinity: and in all her various engagements her behaviour has been as blameless and obliging as her assiduity has been uniform; in so much, that the numerous ladies to whom she is known take a particular pleasure in supplying her with the newest patterns, and earliest information respecting the varieties and changes of fashions; and to the influence of the same good feelings in the breast of Mrs Pringle, Nanny was indebted for the following letter. How far the information which it contains may be deemed exactly suitable to the circumstances in which Miss Nanny's lot is cast, our readers may judge for themselves; but we are happy to state, that it has proved of no small advantage to her: for since it has been known that she had received a full, true, and particular account of all manner of London fashions, from so managing

and notable a woman as the minister's wife of Carnock, her consideration has been so augmented in the opinion of the neighbouring gentlewomen, that she is not only consulted as to funerals, but is often called in to assist in the decoration and arrangement of wedding-dinners, and other occasions of sumptuous banqueting; by which she is enabled, during the suspension of the flowering trade, to earn a lowly but a respected livelihood.

LETTER XV.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Nanny Eydent, Mantua-maker, Seagate Head, Irvine.

London.

DEAR MISS NANNY,—Miss Mally Glencairn would tell you all how it happent that I was disabled, by our misfortunes in the ship, from riting to you konserning the London fashons as I promist; for I wantit to be partikylar, and to say nothing but what I saw with my own eyes, that it might be servisable to you in your bizness—so now I will begin with the old king's burial, as you have sometimes okashon to lend a helping hand in that way at Irvine, and nothing could be more genteeler of the kind than a royal obsakew for a patron; but no living sole can give a distink account of this matter, for you know the old king was the father of his piple, and the croud was so great. Howsomever we got into our oun hired shaze at daylight; and when we were let out at the castel yett of Windsor, we went into the mob, and by-and-by we got within the castel walls, when great was the lamentation for the purdition of shawls and shoos, and the doctor's coat pouch was clippit off by a pocket-picker. We then ran to a wicket-gate, and up an old timber-stair with a rope ravel, and then we got to a great pentit chamber called King George's Hall. After that we were allowt to go into another room full of guns and guards, that told us all to be silent: so then we all went like sawlies, holding our tongues in an awful manner, into a dysmal room hung with black cloth, and lighted with dum wax-candles in silver skonses, and men in a row all in mulancholic posters. At length and at last we came to the

coffin; but although I was as partikylar as possoble, I could see nothing that I would recommend. As for the interment, there was nothing but even-down wastrie—wax-candles blowing away in the wind, and flunkies as fou as pipers, and an unreverent mob that scarsely could demean themselves with decency as the body was going by; only the Duke of York, who carrit the head, had on no hat, which I think was the newest identical thing in the affair: but really there was nothing that could be recommended. Howsomever I understood that there was no draigie, which was a saving; for the bread and wine for such a multitude would have been a destruction to a lord's living: and this is the only point that the fashon set in the king's feunoral may be follot in Irvine.

Since the burial we have been to see the play, where the leddies were all in deep mourning; but excepting that some had black gumfloors on their heads, I saw leetil for admiration—only that bugles, I can ashure you, are not worn at all this season; and surely this murning must be a vast detrimint to bizness—for where there is no verietie there can be but leetil to do in your line. But one thing I should not forget, and that is, that in the vera best houses, after tea and coffee after dinner, a cordial dram is handed about; but likewise I could observe, that the fruit is not set on with the cheese, as in our part of the country, but comes, after the cloth is drawn, with the wine; and no such a thing as a punchbowl is to be heard of within the four walls of London. Howsomever, what I principally notised was, that the tea and coffee is not made by the lady of the house, but out of the room, and brought in without sugar or milk, on servors, every one helping himself, and only plain flimsy loaf and butter is served—no such thing as short-bread, seed-cake, bun, marmlet, or jeelly to be seen, which is an okonomical plan, and well worthy of adaptation in ginteel families with narrow incomes, in Irvine or elsewhere.

But when I tell you what I am now going to say, you will not be surprizt at the great wealth in London. I paid for a bum-beseen gown, not a bit better than the one that was made by you that the sore calamity befell, and no so fine neither, more than three times the price; so you see Miss Nanny, if you were going

to pouse your fortune, you could not do better than pack up your ends and your awls and come to London. But ye're far better at home—for this is not a town for any creditable young woman like you to live in by herself; and I am wearying to be back, though it's hard to say when the doctor will get his counts settlet. I wish you, howsomever, to mind the patches for the bed-cover that I was going to patch, for a licht afternoon seam, as the murning for the king will no be so general with you, and the spring fashions will be coming on to help my gathering. So no more at present from your friend and well-wisher,

JANET PRINGLE.

CHAPTER VI.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.

ON Sunday morning, before going to church, Mr Micklewham called at the manse, and said that he wished particularly to speak to Mr Snodgrass. Upon being admitted, he found the young helper engaged at breakfast, with a book lying on his table, very like a volume of a new novel called *Ivanhoe* in its appearance; but of course it must have been sermons done up in that manner to attract fashionable readers. As soon, however, as Mr Snodgrass saw his visiter, he hastily removed the book, and put it into the table-drawer.

The precentor having taken a seat at the opposite side of the fire, began somewhat diffidently to mention that he had received a letter from the doctor, that made him at a loss whether or not he ought to read it to the elders, as usual, after worship, and therefore was desirous of consulting Mr Snodgrass on the subject, for it recorded, among other things, that the doctor had been at the playhouse; and Mr Micklewham was quite sure that Mr Craig would be neither to bind nor to hold when he heard that, although the transgression was certainly mollified by the nature of the performance. As the clergyman, however, could offer no opinion until he saw the letter, the precentor took

it out of his pocket, and Mr Snodgrass found the contents as follows :—

LETTER XVI.

*The Rev Z. Pringle, D.D., to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster
and Session-clerk, Garnock.*

London.

DEAR SIR,—You will recollect that, about twenty years ago, there was a great sound throughout all the west that a playhouse in Glasgow had been converted into a tabernacle of religion. I remember it was glad tidings to our ears in the parish of Garnock ; and that Mr Craig, who had just been ta'en on for an elder that fall, was for having a thanksgiving day on the account thereof, holding it to be a signal manifestation of a new birth in the of-old-godly town of Glasgow, which had become slack in the way of well-doing, and the church therein lukewarm, like that of Laodicea. It was then said, as I well remember, that when the tabernacle was opened, there had not been seen, since the Kaimslang wark, such a congregation as was there assembled, which was a great proof that it's the matter handled, and not the place, that maketh pure ; so that when you and the elders hear that I have been at the theatre of Drury-Lane, in London, you must not think that I was there to see a carnal stage play, whether tragical or comical, or that I would so far demean myself and my cloth as to be a witness to the chambering and wantonness of ne'er-do-weel playactors. No, Mr Micklewham, what I went to see was an oratorio, a most edifying exercise of psalmody and prayer, under the management of a pious gentleman of the name of Sir George Smart, who is, as I am informed, at the greatest pains to instruct the exhibitioners, they being, for the most part, before they get into his hands, poor uncultivated creatures from Italy, France, and Germany, and other atheistical and popish countries.

They first sung a hymn together very decently, and really with as much civilized harmony as could be expected from novices ; indeed so well, that I thought them almost as melodious as your own singing class of the trades' lads from Kilwin-

ning. Then there was one Mr Braham, a Jewish proselyte, that was set forth to show us a specimen of his proficiency. In the praying part, what he said was no objectionable as to the matter; but he drawled in his manner to such a pitch, that I thought he would have broken out into an even-down song, as I sometimes think of yourself when you spin out the last word in reading out the line in a warm summer afternoon. In the hymn by himself, he did better; he was, however, sometimes like to lose the tune, but the people gave him great encouragement when he got back again. Upon the whole, I had no notion that there was any such Christianity in practice among the Londoners, and I am happy to tell you, that the house was very well filled, and the congregation wonderful attentive. No doubt that excellent man Mr W*****, has a hand in these public strainings after grace, but he was not there that night; for I have seen him; and surely at the sight I could not but say to myself, that it's beyond the compass of the understanding of man to see what great things Providence worketh with small means, for Mr W. is a small creature. When I beheld his diminutive stature, and thought of what he had achieved for the poor negroes and others in the house of bondage, I said to myself, that here the hand of Wisdom is visible, for the load of perishable mortality is laid lightly on his spirit, by which it is enabled to clap its wings and crow so crouselly on the dunghill top of this world; yea, even in the House of Parliament.

I was taken last Thursday morning to breakfast with him in his house at Kensington, by an East India man, who is likewise surely a great saint. It was a heart-healing meeting of many of the godly, which he holds weekly in the season; and we had such a warsle of the spirit among us that the like cannot be told. I was called upon to pray, and a worthy gentleman said, when I was done, that he never had met with more apostolic simplicity—indeed, I could see with the tail of my eye, while I was praying, that the chief saint himself was listening with a curious pleasant satisfaction.

As for our doings here anent the legacy, things are going forward in the regular manner; but the expense is terrible, and I have been obliged to take up money on account; but, as it

was freely given by the agents, I am in the hopes all will end well; for, considering that we are but strangers to them, they would not have assisted us in this matter had they not been sure of the means of payment in their own hands.

The people of London are surprising kind to us: we need not, if we thought proper ourselves, eat a dinner in our own lodgings; but it would ill become me, at my time of life, and with the character for sobriety that I have maintained, to show an example in my latter days of riotous living; therefore, Mrs Pringle, and her daughter and me, have made a point of going no where three times in the week; but as for Andrew Pringle, my son, he has forgathered with some acquaintance, and I fancy we will be obliged to let him take the length of his tether for a while. But not altogether without a curb neither, for the agent's son, young Mr Argent, had almost persuaded him to become a member of Parliament, which he said he could get him made, for more than a thousand pounds less than the common price—the state of the new king's health having lowered the commodity of seats. But this I would by no means hear of: he is not yet come to years of discretion enough to sit in council; and, moreover, he has not been tried; and no man, till he has out of doors shown something of what he is, should be entitled to power and honour within. Mrs Pringle, however, thought he might do as well as young Dunure; but Andrew Pringle, my son, has not the solidity of head that Mr K****dy has, and is over free and outspoken, and cannot take such pains to make his little go a great way, like that well-behaved young gentleman. But you will be grieved to hear that Mr K****dy is in opposition to the government; and truly I am at a loss to understand how a man of Whig principles can be an adversary to the House of Hanover. But I never meddled much in politick affairs, except at this time, when I prohibited Andrew Pringle, my son, from offering to be a member of Parliament, notwithstanding the great bargain that he would have had of the place.

And since we are on public concerns, I should tell you, that I was minded to send you a newspaper at the second-hand, every day when we were done with it. But when we came to enquire, we found that we could get the newspaper for a shilling a-week

every morning but Sunday, to our breakfast, which was so much cheaper than buying a whole paper, that Mrs Pringle thought it would be a great extravagance ; and, indeed, when I came to think of the loss of time a newspaper every day would occasion to my people, I considered it would be very wrong of me to send you any at all. For I do think that honest folks in a far-off country parish should not make or meddle with the things that pertain to government—the more especially, as it is well known that there is as much falsehood as truth in newspapers, and they have not the means of testing their statements. Not, however, that I am an advocate for passive obedience ; God forbid ! On the contrary, if ever the time should come, in my day, of a saint-slaying tyrant attempting to bind the burden of prelatic abominations on our backs, such a blast of the gospel trumpet would be heard in Garnock as it does not become me to say ; but I leave it to you and others, who have experienced my capacity as a soldier of the word so long, to think what it would then be.—Meanwhile, I remain, my dear sir, your friend and pastor,

Z. PRINGLE.

When Mr Snodgrass had perused this epistle, he paused some time, seemingly in doubt, and then he said to Mr Micklewham, that, considering the view which the doctor had taken of the matter, and that he had not gone to the playhouse for the motives which usually take bad people to such places. he thought there could be no possible harm in reading the letter to the elders ; and that Mr Craig, so far from being displeased, would doubtless be exceedingly rejoiced to learn, that the playhouses of London were occasionally so well employed as on the night when the doctor was there.

Mr Micklewham then enquired if Mr Snodgrass had heard from Mr Andrew, and was answered in the affirmative ; but the letter was not read. Why it was withheld our readers must guess for themselves ; but we have been fortunate enough to obtain the following copy.

LETTER XVII.

Andrew Pringle, Esq., to the Rev. Mr Charles Snodgrass.

London.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—As the season advances, London gradually unfolds, like Nature, all the variety of her powers and pleasures. By the Argents we have been introduced effectually into society, and have now only to choose our acquaintance among those whom we like best. I should employ another word than choose; for I am convinced that there is no choice in the matter. In his friendships and affections, man is subject to some inscrutable moral law, similar in its effects to what the chemists call affinity. While under the blind influence of this sympathy, we, forsooth, suppose ourselves free agents! But a truce with philosophy.

The amount of the legacy is now ascertained. The stock, however, in which a great part of the money is vested being shut, the transfer to my father cannot be made for some time; and till this is done, my mother cannot be persuaded that we have yet got any thing to trust to—an unfortunate notion which renders her very unhappy. The old gentleman himself takes no interest now in the business. He has got his mind at ease by the payment of all the legacies; and having fallen in with some of the members of that political junta, the Saints, who are worldly enough to link, as often as they can, into their association the powerful by wealth or talent, his whole time is occupied in assisting to promote their humbug; and he has absolutely taken it into his head, that the attention he receives from them for his subscriptions is on account of his eloquence as a preacher, and that hitherto he has been altogether in an error with respect to his own abilities. The effect of this is abundantly amusing; but the source of it is very evident. Like most people who pass a sequestered life, he had formed an exaggerated opinion of public characters; and on seeing them in reality so little superior to the generality of mankind, he imagines that he was all the time nearer to their level than he had ventured to suppose; and the discovery has placed him on the happiest

terms with himself. It is impossible that I can respect his manifold excellent qualities and goodness of heart more than I do; but there is an innocency in this simplicity, which, while it often compels me to smile, makes me feel towards him a degree of tenderness, somewhat too familiar for that filial reverence that is due from a son.

Perhaps, however, you will think me scarcely less under the influence of a similar delusion when I tell you, that I have been somehow or other drawn also into an association, not indeed so public or potent as that of the Saints, but equally persevering in the objects for which it has been formed. The drift of the Saints, as far as I can comprehend the matter, is to procure the advancement to political power of men distinguished for the purity of their lives and the integrity of their conduct; and in that way, I presume, they expect to effect the accomplishment of that blessed epoch, the Millennium, when the saints are to rule the whole earth. I do not mean to say that this is their decided and determined object; I only infer, that it is the necessary tendency of their proceedings; and I say it with all possible respect and sincerity, that, as a public party, the Saints are not only perhaps the most powerful, but the party which, at present, best deserves power.

The association, however, with which I have happened to become connected, is of a very different description. Their object is, to pass through life with as much pleasure as they can obtain, without doing any thing unbecoming the rank of gentlemen, and the character of men of honour. We do not assemble such numerous meetings as the Saints, the Whigs, or the Radicals, nor are our speeches delivered with so much vehemence. We even, I think, tacitly exclude oratory. In a word, our meetings seldom exceed the perfect number of the muses; and our object on these occasions is not so much to deliberate on plans of prospective benefits to mankind, as to enjoy the present time for ourselves, under the temperate inspiration of a well-cooked dinner, flavoured with elegant wine, and just so much of mind as suits the fleeting topics of the day. T——, whom I formerly mentioned, introduced me to this delightful society. The members consist of about fifty gentlemen, who dine occa-

sionally at each others' houses; the company being chiefly selected from the brotherhood, if that term can be applied to a circle of acquaintance, who, without any formal institution of rules, have gradually acquired a consistency that approximates to organization. But the universe of this vast city contains a plurality of systems; and the one into which I have been attracted may be described as that of the idle intellects. In general society, the members of our party are looked up to as men of taste and refinement, and are received with a degree of deference that bears some resemblance to the respect paid to the hereditary endowment of rank. They consist either of young men who have acquired distinction at college, or gentlemen of fortune who have a relish for intellectual pleasures, free from the acerbities of politics, or the dull formalities which so many of the pious think essential to their religious pretensions. The wealthy furnish the entertainments, which are always in a superior style, and the ingredient of birth is not requisite in the qualifications of a member, although some jealousy is entertained of professional men, and not a little of merchants. T——, to whom I am also indebted for this view of that circle of which he is the brightest ornament, gives a felicitous explanation of the reason. He says, professional men, who are worth any thing at all, are always ambitious, and endeavour to make their acquaintance subservient to their own advancement; while merchants are liable to such casualties, that their friends are constantly exposed to the risk of being obliged to sink them below their wonted equality, by granting them favours in times of difficulty, or, what is worse, by refusing to grant them.

I am much indebted to you for the introduction to your friend G——. He is one of us; or rather, he moves in an eccentric sphere of his own, which crosses, I believe, almost all the orbits of all the classed and classifiable systems of London. I found him exactly what you described; and we were on the frankest footing of old friends in the course of the first quarter of an hour. He did me the honour to fancy that I belonged, as a matter of course, to some one of the literary fraternities of Edinburgh, and that I would be curious to see the associations of the learned here. What he said respecting them was highly characteristic of the

man. "They are," said he, "the dullest things possible. On my return from abroad, I visited them all, expecting to find something of that easy disengaged mind which constitutes the charm of those of France and Italy. But in London, among those who have a character to keep up, there is such a vigilant circumspection, that I should as soon expect to find nature in the ballets of the opera-house, as genius at the established haunts of authors, artists, and men of science. Banks gives, I suppose officially, a public breakfast weekly, and opens his house for conversations on the Sundays. I found at his breakfasts, tea and coffee, with hot rolls, and men of celebrity afraid to speak. At the conversations, there was something even worse. A few plausible talking fellows created a buzz in the room; and the merits of some paltry nicknack of mechanism or science was discussed. The party consisted undoubtedly of the most eminent men of their respective lines in the world; but they were each and all so apprehensive of having their ideas purloined, that they took the most guarded care never to speak of any thing that they deemed of the slightest consequence, or to hazard an opinion that might be called in question. The man who either wishes to augment his knowledge, or to pass his time agreeably, will never expose himself to a repetition of the fastidious exhibitions of engineers and artists who have their talents at market. But such things are among the curiosities of London; and if you have any inclination to undergo the initiating mortification of being treated as a young man who may be likely to interfere with their professional interests, I can easily get you introduced."

I do not know whether to ascribe these strictures of your friend to humour or misanthropy; but they were said without bitterness; indeed, so much as matters of course, that, at the moment, I could not but feel persuaded they were just. I spoke of them to T——, who says, that undoubtedly G——'s account of the exhibitions is true in substance, but that it is his own sharp-sightedness which causes him to see them so offensively; for that ninety-nine out of the hundred in the world would deem an evening spent at the conversations of Sir Joseph Banks a very high intellectual treat.

G—— has invited me to dinner, and I expect some amusement; for T——, who is acquainted with him, says, that it is his fault to employ his mind too much on all occasions; and that, in all probability, there will be something, either in the fare or the company, that I shall remember as long as I live. However, you shall hear all about it in my next.—Yours,

ANDREW PRINGLE.

On the same Sunday on which Mr Micklewham consulted Mr Snodgrass as to the propriety of reading the doctor's letter to the elders, the following epistle reached the post-office of Irvine, and was delivered by Saunders Dickie himself, at the door of Mrs Glibbans, to her servan' lassie, who, as her mistress had gone to the Relief Church, told him, that he would have to come for the postage the morn's morning. "Oh!" said Saunders, "there's naething to pay but my ain trouble, for it's frankit; but aiblins the mistress will gie me a bit drappie, and so I'll come betimes i' the morning."

LETTER XVIII.

Mrs Pringle to Mrs Glibbans.

London.

MY DEAR MRS GLIBBANS,—The breking up of the old parliament has been the cause why I did not right you before, it having taken it out of my poor to get a frank for my letter till yesterday; and I do ashure you that I was most extraordinar uneasy at the great delay, wishing much to let you know the decayt state of the gospel in thir perts, which is the pleasure of your life to study by day, and meditate on in the watches of the night.

There is no want of going to church, and, if that was a sign of grease and peese in the kingdom of Christ, the toun of London might hold a high head in the tabernacles of the faithful and true witnesses. But saving Dr Nichol of Swallo-Street, and Dr Manuel of London-Wall, there is nothing sound in the way of preeching here; and when I tell you that Mr John Gant, your friend, and some other flea-lugged fallows, have set up a

Heelon congregation, and got a young man to preach Erse to the English, ye maun think in what a state sinful souls are left in London. But what I have been the most consarned about is the state of the dead. I am no meaning those who are dead in trespasses and sins, but the true dead. Ye will hardly think that they are buried in a popish-like manner, with prayers, and white gowns, and ministers, and spadefuls of yerd cast upon them, and laid in vaults, like kists of orangers in a grocery seller—and I am told that, after a time, they are taken out when the vault is shurfeeted, and their bones brunt, if they are no made into lamp-black by a secret wark—which is a clean proof to me that a right doctrine cannot be established in this land—there being so little respect shone to the dead.

The worst point, howsomever, of all is—what is done with the prayers? and I have heard you say, that although there was nothing more to object to the wonderful Doctor Chammers of Glasgow, that his reading of his sermons was testimony against him in the great controversy of sound doctrine; but what will you say to reading of prayers, and no only reading of prayers, but printed prayers, as if the contrite heart of the sinner had no more to say to the Lord, in the hour of fasting and humiliation, than what a bishop can indite, and a bookseller make profit o' ? “Verily,” as I may say, in a word of scripture, I doubt if the glad tidings of salvation have yet been preached in this land of London; but the ministers have good stipends, and where the ground is well manured, it may in time bring forth fruit meet for repentance.

There is another thing that behoves me to mention, and that is, that an elder is not to be seen in the churches of London, which is a sore signal that the piple are left to themselves; and in what state the morality can be, you may guess with an eye of pity. But on the Sabbath nights, there is such a going and coming, that it's more like a cried fair than the Lord's night—all sorts of poor people, instead of meditating on their bygone toil and misery of the week, making the Sunday their own day, as if they had not a greater Master to serve on that day, than the earthly man whom they served in the week-days. It is, howsomever, past the poor of nature to tell you of the sinfulness of

London; and you may well think what is to be the end of all things, when I assure you that there is a newspaper sold every Sabbath morning, and read by those that never look at their Bibles. Our landlady asked us if we would take one; but I thought the doctor would have fired the house; and you know it is not a small thing that kindles his passion. In short, London is not a place to come to hear the tidings of salvation preached—no that I mean to deny that there is not herein more than five righteous persons in it, and I trust the cornal's hagent is one; for if he is not, we are undone, having been obligated to take on already more than a hundred pounds of debt to the account of our living, and the legacy yet in the dead-thraws. But as I mean this for a spiritual letter, I will say no more about the root of all evil, as it is called in the words of truth and holiness; so referring you to what I have told Miss Mally Glencairn about the legacy, and other things nearest my heart, I remain, my dear Mrs Glibbans, your fellow Christian and sinner,

JANET PRINGLE.

Mrs Glibbans received this letter between the preachings, and it was observed by all her acquaintance, during the afternoon service, that she was a laden woman. Instead of standing up at the prayers, as her wont was, she kept her seat, sitting with downcast eyes, and ever and anon her left hand, which was laid over her book on the reading-board of the pew, was raised and allowed to drop with a particular moral emphasis, bespeaking the mournful cogitations of her spirit. On leaving the church, somebody whispered to the minister that surely Mrs Glibbans had heard some sore news; upon which that meek, mild, and modest good soul hastened towards her, and enquired, with more than his usual kindness—how she was? Her answer was brief and mysterious; and she shook her head in such a manner that showed him all was not right.—“Have you heard lately of your friends the Pringles?” said he, in his sedate manner; “when do they think of leaving London?”

“I wish they may ever get out o’t,” was the agitated reply of the afflicted lady.

“I am very sorry to hear you say so,” responded the minister.

"I thought all was in a fair way to an issue of the settlement—I'm very sorry to hear this."

"Oh, sir!" said the mourner, "don't think that I am grieved for them and their legacy—filthy lucre!—no sir; but I have had a letter that has made my hair stand on end. Be none surprised if you hear of the earth opening, and London swallowed up, and a voice crying in the wilderness, 'Woe, woe!'"

The gentle priest was much surprised by this information: it was evident that Mrs Glibbans had received a terrible account of the wickedness of London; and that the weight upon her pious spirit was owing to that cause. He, therefore, accompanied her home, and administered all the consolation he was able to give; assuring her, that it was in the power of Omnipotence to convert the stony heart into one of flesh and tenderness, and to raise the British metropolis out of the miry clay, and place it on a hill, as a city that could not be hid; which Mrs Glibbans was so thankful to hear, that, as soon as he had left her, she took her tea in a satisfactory frame of mind, and went the same night to Miss Mally Glencairn to hear what Mrs Pringle had said to her. No visit ever happened more opportunely; for, just as Mrs Glibbans knocked at the door, Miss Isabella Todd made her appearance. She had also received a letter from Rachel, in which it will be seen that reference was made likewise to Mrs Pringle's epistle to Miss Mally.

LETTER XIX.

Miss Rachel Pringle to Miss Isabella Todd.

London.

MY DEAR BELL,—How delusive are the flatteries of fortune! The wealth that has been showered upon us, beyond all our hopes, has brought no pleasure to my heart; and I pour my unavailing sighs for your absence, when I would communicate the cause of my unhappiness. Captain Sabre has been most assiduous in his attentions; and I must confess to your sympathizing bosom, that I do begin to find that he has an interest in mine. But my mother will not listen to his proposals, nor allow

me to give him any encouragement, till the fatal legacy is settled. What can be her motive for this, I am unable to divine; for the captain's fortune is far beyond what I could ever have expected without the legacy, and equal to all I could hope for with it. If, therefore, there is any doubt of the legacy being paid, she should allow me to accept him; and, if there is none, what can I do better? In the mean time, we are going about seeing the sights; but the general mourning is a great drawback on the splendour of gaiety. It ends, however, next Sunday; and then the ladies, like the spring flowers, will be all in full blossom. I was with the Argents at the opera on Saturday last, and it far surpassed my ideas of grandeur. But the singing was not good—I never could make out the end or the beginning of a song, and it was drowned with the violins; the scenery, however, was lovely: but I must not say a word about the dancers, only that the females behaved in a manner so shocking, that I could scarcely believe it was possible for the delicacy of our sex to do. They are, however, all foreigners, who are, you know, naturally of a licentious character, especially the French women.

We have taken an elegant house in Baker Street, where we go on Monday next, and our own new carriage is to be home in the course of the week. All this, which has been done by the advice of Mrs Argent, gives my mother great uneasiness, in case any thing should yet happen to the legacy. My brother, however, who knows the law better than she, only laughs at her fears; and my father has found such a wonderful deal to do in religion here, that he is quite delighted, and is busy from morning to night in writing letters, and giving charitable donations. I am soon to be no less busy, but in another manner. Mrs Argent has advised us to get in accomplished masters for me; so that, as soon as we are removed into our own local habitation, I am to begin with drawing and music, and the foreign languages. I am not, however, to learn much of the piano: Mrs A. thinks it would take up more time than I can now afford; but I am to be cultivated in my singing, and she is to try if the master that taught Miss Stephens has an hour to spare—and to use her influence to persuade him to give it to me, although he only

receives pupils for perfectioning, except they belong to families of distinction.

My brother had a hankering to be made a member of parliament, and got Mr Charles Argent to speak to my father about it; but neither he nor my mother would hear of such a thing, which I was very sorry for, as it would have been so convenient to me for getting franks; and I wonder my mother did not think of that, as she grudges nothing so much as the price of postage. But nothing do I grudge so little, especially when it is a letter from you. Why do you not write me oftener, and tell me what is saying about us, particularly by that spiteful toad Becky Glibbans, who never could hear of any good happening to her acquaintance, without being as angry as if it was obtained at her own expense?

I do not like Miss Argent so well on acquaintance as I did at first; not that she is not a very fine lassie, but she gives herself such airs at the harp and piano—because she can play every sort of music at the first sight, and sing, by looking at the notes, any song, although she never heard it, which may be very well in a playactor, or a governess, that has to win her bread by music; but I think the education of a modest young lady might have been better conducted.

Through the civility of the Argents, we have been introduced to a great number of families, and been much invited; but all the parties are so ceremonious that I am never at my ease, which my brother says is owing to my rustic education, which I cannot understand; for although the people are finer dressed, and the dinners and rooms grander than what I have seen, either at Irvine or Kilmarnock, the company are no wiser; and I have not met with a single literary character among them. And what are ladies and gentlemen without mind, but a well-dressed mob! It is to mind alone that I am at all disposed to pay the homage of diffidence.

The acquaintance of the Argents are all of the first circle, and we have got an invitation to a route from the Countess of J****y, in consequence of meeting her with them. She is a charming woman, and I anticipate great pleasure. Miss Argent says, however, she is ignorant and presuming; but how is it

possible that she can be so, as she was an earl's daughter, and bred up for distinction? Miss Argent may be presuming; but a countess is necessarily above that, at least it would only become a duchess or marchioness to say so. This, however, is not the only occasion in which I have seen the detractive disposition of that young lady, who, with all her simplicity of manners and great accomplishments, is, you will perceive, just like ourselves, rustic, as she doubtless thinks our breeding has been.

I have observed that nobody in London enquires about who another is; and that in company every one is treated on an equality, unless when there is some remarkable personal peculiarity; so that one really knows nothing of those whom one meets. But my paper is full, and I must not take another sheet, as my mother has a letter to send in the same frank to Miss Mally Glencairn.—Believe me, ever affectionately, yours,

RACHEL PRINGLE.

The three ladies knew not very well what to make of this letter. They thought there was a change in Rachel's ideas, and that it was not for the better; and Miss Isabella expressed, with a sentiment of sincere sorrow, that the acquisition of fortune seemed to have brought out some unamiable traits in her character, which, perhaps, had she not been exposed to the companions and temptations of the great world, would have slumbered, unfelt by herself and unknown to her friends.

Mrs Glibbans declared, that it was a waking of original sin, which the iniquity of London was bringing forth, as the heat of summer causes the rosin and sap to issue from the bark of the tree. In the mean time, Miss Mally had opened her letter, of which we subjoin a copy.

LETTER XX.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Mally Glencairn.

London.

DEAR MISS MALLY,—I greatly stand in need of your advise and counsel at this time. The doctor's affair comes on at a

fearful slow rate, and the money goes like snow off a dyke. It is not to be told what has been paid for legacy-duty, and no legacy yet in hand ; and we have been obligated to lift a whole hundred pounds out of the residue, and what that is to be the Lord only knows. But Miss Jenny Macbride, she has got her thousand pound, all in one bank-bill, sent to her ; Thomas Bowie, the doctor in Ayr, he has got his five hundred pounds ; and auld Nanse Sorrel, that was nurse to the cornal, she has got the first year of her twenty pounds a-year ; but we have gotten nothing, and I jealouse that, if things go on at this rate, there will be nothing to get ; and what will become of us then, after all the trubble and outlay that we have been pot to by this coming to London ?

Howsomever, this is the black side of the story ; for Mr Charles Argent, in a jocose way, proposed to get Andrew made a parliament member for three thousand pounds, which he said was cheap ; and surely he would not have thought of such a thing, had he not known that Andrew would have the money to pay for't ; and over and above this, Mrs Argent has been recommending Captain Sabre to me for Rachel, and she says he is a stated gentleman, with two thousand pounds rental, and her nephew ; and surely she would not think Rachel a match for him, unless she had an inkling from her gudeman of what Rachel's to get. But I have told her that we would think of nothing of the sort till the counts war settled, which she may tell to her gudeman ; and, if he approves the match, it will make him hasten on the settlement, for really I am growing tired of this London, whar I am just like a fish out of the water. The Englishers are sae obstinate in their own way, that I can get them to do nothing like Christians ; and, what is most provoking of all, their ways are very good when you know them ; but they have no instink to teach a body how to learn them. Just this very morning I told the lass to get a jiggot of mutton for the morn's dinner, and she said there was not such a thing to be had in London, and threepit it till I couldna stand her ; and, had it not been that Mr Argent's French servan' man happened to come with a cart, inviting us to a ball, and who understood what a jiggot was, I might have reasoned till the day of doom

without redress. As for the doctor, I declare he's like an enchantit person, for he has fallen in with a party of the elect here, as he says; and they have a kilfud yoking every Thursday at the house of Mr W——, where the doctor has been, and was asked to pray, and did it with great effec, which has made him so up in the buckle that he does nothing but go to Bible soceeyetis, and mishonary meetings, and cherity sarmons, which cost a poor of money.

But what consarns me more than all is, that the temptations of this vanity fair have turnt the head of Andrew; and he has bought two horses, with an English man servan', which you know is an eating moth. But how he payt for them, and whar he is to keep them, is past the compass of my understanding. In short, if the legacy does not cast up soon, I see nothing left for us but to leave the world as a legacy to you all, for my heart will be broken—and I often wish that the cornal hadna made us his residees, but only given us a clean soom, like Miss Jenny Macbride, although it had been no more; for, my dear Miss Mally, it does not doo for a woman of my time of life to be taken out of her element, and, instead of looking after her family with a thrifty eye, to be sitting dressed all day seeing the money fleeing like sclate stanes. But what I have to tell is worse than all this: we have been persuaded to take a furnisht house, where we go on Monday; and we are to pay for it, for three months, no less than a hundred and fifty pounds, which is more than the half of the doctor's whole stipend is, when the meal is twentypence the peck; and we are to have three servan' lassies, beside Andrew's man, and the coachman that we have hired altogether for ourselves, having been persuaded to trist a new carriage of our own by the Argents, which I trust the Argents will find money to pay for; and masters are to come in to teach Rachel the fashionable accomplishments, Mrs Argent thinking she was rather old now to be sent to a boarding-school. But what I am to get to do for so many vorashous servants is dreadful to think, there being no such thing as a wheel within the four walls of London; and if there was, the Englishers know nothing about spinning. In short, Miss Mally, I am driven dimentit; and I wish I could get the doctor to come home with me to our manse, and leave all

to Andrew and Rachel, with kurators ; but, as I said, he's as mickle by himself as ony body, and says that his candle has been hidden under a bushel at Garnock more than thirty years, which looks as if the poor man was fey : howsomever, he's happy in his delooshon ; for if he was afflictit with that forethought and wisdom that I have, I know not what would be the upshot of all this calamity. But we maun hope for the best ; and, happen what will, I am, dear Miss Mally, your sincere friend,

JANET PRINGLE.

Miss Mally sighed as she concluded, and said, " Riches do not always bring happiness ; and poor Mrs Pringle would have been far better looking after her cows and her butter, and keeping her lassies at their wark, than with all this galravitching and grandeur."—" Ah !" added Mrs Glibbans, " she's now a testifier to the truth—she's now a testifier. Happy it will be for her if she's enabled to make a sanctified use of the dispensation."

CHAPTER VII.

DISCOVERIES AND REBELLIONS.

ONE evening as Mr Snodgrass was taking a solitary walk towards Irvine, for the purpose of calling on Miss Mally Glencairn, to enquire what had been her latest accounts from their mutual friends in London, and to read to her a letter which he had received two days before from Mr Andrew Pringle, he met, near Eglintoun Gates, that pious woman, Mrs Glibbans, coming to Garnock, brimful of some most extraordinary intelligence. The air was raw and humid, and the ways were deep and foul ; she was, however, protected without, and tempered within, against the dangers of both. Over her venerable satin mantle, lined with cat-skin, she wore a scarlet duffle Bath cloak, with which she was wont to attend the tent sermons of the Kilwin-

ning and Dreghorn preachings in cold and inclement weather. Her black silk petticoat was pinned up, that it might not receive injury from the nimble paddling of her short steps in the mire; and she carried her best shoes and stockings in a handkerchief to be changed at the manse, and had fortified her feet for the road in coarse worsted hose, and thick plain-soled leather shoes.

Mr Snodgrass proposed to turn back with her, but she would not permit him. "No, Sir," said she, "what I am about you cannot meddle in. You are here but a stranger—come to-day and gane to-morrow;—and it does not pertain to you to sift into the doings that have been done before your time. Oh dear! but this is a sad thing—nothing like it since the silencing of M'Auly of Greenock. What will the worthy doctor say when he hears tell o't? Had it fa'n out with that neighering body, James Daff, I wouldna hae car't a snuff of tobacco; but wi' Mr Craig, a man so gifted wi' the power of the Spirit, as I hae often had a delightful experience! Ay, ay, Mr Snodgrass, take heed lest ye fall: we maun all lay it to heart; but I hope the trooper is still within the jurisdiction of church censures. She shouldna be spair't. Nae doubt, the fault lies with her, and it is that I am going to search: yea, as with a lighted candle."

Mr Snodgrass expressed his inability to understand to what Mrs Glibbans alluded, and a very long and interesting disclosure took place, the substance of which may be gathered from the following letter; the immediate and instigating cause of the lady's journey to Garnock, being the alarming intelligence which she had that day received of Mr Craig's servant-damsel Betty, having, by the style and title of Mrs Craig, sent for Nanse Swaddle, the midwife, to come to her in her own case, which seemed to Mrs Glibbans nothing short of a miracle, Betty having, the very Sunday before, helped the kettle when she drank tea with Mr Craig, and sat at the room door, on a buffet-stool brought from the kitchen, while he performed family worship, to the great solace and edification of his visiter

LETTER XXI.

The Rev. Z. Pringle, D.D., to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster and Session-clerk, Garnock.

DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 24th, which has given me a great surprise to hear, that Mr Craig was married, as far back as Christmas, to his own servant lass Betty, and me to know nothing of it, nor you neither, until it was time to be speaking to the midwife. To be sure, Mr Craig, who is an elder, and a very rigid man, in his animadversions on the immoralities that come before the session, must have had his own good reasons for keeping his marriage so long a secret. Tell him, however, from me, that I wish both him and Mrs Craig much joy and felicity; but he should be milder for the future on the thoughtlessness of youth and headstrong passions. Not that I insinuate that there has been any occasion in the conduct of such a godly man to cause a suspicion; but it's wonderful how he was married in December, and I cannot say that I am altogether so proud to hear it as I am at all times of the well-doing of my people. Really the way that Mr Daff has comported himself in this matter is greatly to his credit; and I doubt if the thing had happened with him, that Mr Craig would have sifted with a sharp eye how he came to be married in December, and without bridal and banquet. For my part, I could not have thought it of Mr Craig, but it's done now, and the less we say about it the better; so I think with Mr Daff, that it must be looked over; but when I return, I will speak both to the husband and wife, and not without letting them have an inkling of what I think about their being married in December, which was a great shame, even if there was no sin in it. But I will say no more; for truly, Mr Micklewham, the longer we live in this world, and the farther we go, and the better we know ourselves, the less reason have we to think slightingly of our neighbours; but the more to convince our hearts and understandings, that we are all prone to evil, and desperately wicked. For where does hypocrisy not abound? and I have had my own

experience here, that what a man is to the world, and to his own heart, is a very different thing.

In my last letter, I gave you a pleasing notification of the growth, as I thought, of spirituality in this Babylon of deceitfulness, thinking that you and my people would be gladdened with the tidings of the repute and estimation in which your minister was held, and I have dealt largely in the way of public charity. But I doubt that I have been governed by a spirit of ostentation, and not with that lowly-mindedness, without which all almsgiving is but a serving of the altars of Belzebub; for the chastening hand has been laid upon me, but with the kindness and pity which a tender father hath for his dear children.

I was requested by those who come so cordially to me with their subscription papers, for schools and suffering worth, to preach a sermon to get a collection. I have no occasion to tell you, that when I exert myself, what effect I can produce; and I never made so great an exertion before, which in itself was a proof that it was with the two bladders, pomp and vanity, that I had committed myself to swim on the uncertain waters of London; for surely my best exertions were due to my people. But when the Sabbath came upon which I was to hold forth, how were my hopes withered, and my expectations frustrated! Oh, Mr Micklewham, what an inattentive congregation was yonder! many slumbered and slept, and I sowed the words of truth and holiness in vain upon their barren and stony hearts. There is no true grace among some that I shall not name, for I saw them whispering and smiling like the scorers, and altogether heedless unto the precious things of my discourse, which could not have been the case had they been sincere in their professions; for I never preached more to my own satisfaction on any occasion whatsoever—and, when I return to my own parish, you shall hear what I said, as I will preach the same sermon over again, for I am not going now to print it, as I did once think of doing, and to have dedicated it to Mr W——.

We are going about in an easy way, seeing what is to be seen in the shape of curiosities; but the whole town is in a state of ferment with the election of members to parliament. I have

been to see't, both in the Guildhall and at Covent-Garden, and it's a frightful thing to see how the Radicals roar like bulls of Bashan, and put down the speakers in behalf of the government. I hope no harm will come of yon; but I must say, that I prefer our own quiet canny Scotch way at Irvine. Well do I remember, for it happened in the year I was licensed, that the town-council, the Lord Eglinton that was shot being then provost, took in the late Thomas Bowet to be a counsellor; and Thomas, not being versed in election matters, yet minding to please his lordship, (for, like the rest of the council, he had always a proper veneration for those in power,) he, as I was saying, consulted Joseph Boyd the weaver, who was then dean of guild, as to the way of voting; whereupon Joseph, who was a discreet man, said to him, "Ye'll just say as I say, and I'll say what Bailie Shaw says, for he will do what my Lord bids him;" which was as peaceful a way of sending up a member to Parliament as could well be devised.

· But you know that politics are far from my hand—they belong to the temporalities of the community; and the ministers of peace and good-will to man should neither make nor meddle with them. I wish, however, that these tumultuous elections were well over, for they have had an effect on the per cents, where our bit legacy is funded; and it would terrify you to hear what we have thereby already lost. We have not, however, lost so much but that I can spare a little to the poor among my people; so you will, in the dry weather, after the seed-time, hire two-three thackers to mend the thack on the roofs of such of the cottars' houses as stand in need of mending, and banker M——y will pay the expense; and I beg you to go to him on receipt hereof, for he has a line for yourself, which you will be sure to accept as a testimony from me for the great trouble that my absence from the parish has given to you among my people; and I am, dear Sir, your friend and pastor,

Z. PRINGLE.

As Mrs Glibbans would not permit Mr Snodgrass to return with her to the manse, he pursued his journey alone to the Kirk-gate of Irvine, where he found Miss Mally Glencairn on the eve of

sitting down to her solitary tea. On seeing her visiter enter, after the first compliments on the state of health and weather were over, she expressed her hopes that he had not drank tea; and, on receiving a negative, which she did not quite expect, as she thought he had been perhaps invited by some of her neighbours, she put in an additional spoonful on his account; and brought from her corner cupboard with the glass door, an ancient French pickle-bottle, in which she had preserved, since the great tea-drinking formerly mentioned, the remainder of the two ounces of carvey, the best, Mrs Nanse bought for that memorable occasion. A short conversation then took place relative to the Pringles; and while the tea was masking, for Miss Mally said it took a long time to draw, she read to him the following letter:—

LETTER XXII.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Mally Glencairn.

MY DEAR MISS MALLY,—Trully, it may be said, that the croun of England is upon the downfal, and surely we are all seething in the pot of revolution, for the scum is mounting uppermost. Last week, no farther gone than on Mononday, we came to our new house heer in Baker Street; but it's nather to be bakit nor brewt what I hav sin syne suffert. You no my way, and that I like a been house, but no wastrie, and so I needna tell yoo that we hav had good diners; to be sure, there was not a meerakle left to fill five baskets every day, but an abundance, with a proper kitchen of breed, to fill the bellies of four dumasticks. Howsomever, lo and behold! what was clecking down stairs. On Saturday morning, as we were sitting at our breakfast, the doctor reading the newspapers, who shoud com intil the room but Andrew's grum, follo't by the rest, to give us warning that they were all going to quat our sairvice, becas they were starvit. I thocht that I would hav fentit could deed; but the doctor, who is a consiederat man, inquairt what made them starve, and then there was such an approbrious cry about cold meet and bare bones, and no beer. It was an evendoun

resurrection—a rebellion waur than the forty-five. In short, Miss Mally, to make a leetle of a lang tail, they would have a hot joint day and day about, and a tree of yill to stand on the gauntress for their draw and drink, with a cock and a pail; and we were obligated to evacuate to their terms, and to let them go to their wark with flying colors; so you see how dangerous it is to live among this piple, and their noshans of liberty.

You will see by the newspapers that there's a lection going on for parliament. It maks my corruption to rise to hear of such doings; and if I was a government as I'm but a woman, I would put them doon with the strong hand, just to be revenged on the proud stomaks of these het and fou English.

We have gotten our money in the pesents put into our name; but I have had no peese since, for they have fallen in price three eight parts, which is very near a half, and if the go at this rate, where will all our legacy soon be? I have no goo of the pesents; so we are on the look-out for a landed estate, being a shure thing

Captain Saber is still sneking after Rachel; and if she were awee perfited in her accomplugments, it's no saying what might happen, for he's a fine lad; but she's o'er young to be the heed of a family. Howsomever, the Lord's will maun be done; and if there is to be a match, she'll no have to fight for gentility with a straitent circumstance.

As for Andrew, I wish he was weel settlt; and we have our hopes that he's beginning to draw up with Miss Argent, who will have, no doobt, a great fortune, and is a treasure of a creature in herself, being just as simple as a lamb; but, to be sure, she has had every advantage of edication, being brought up in a most fashionable boarding-school.

I hope you have got the box I sent by the smak, and that you like the patron of the goon.—So no more at present, but remains, dear Miss Mally, your sinsaire friend,

JANET PRINGLE.

“The box,” said Miss Mally, “that Mrs Pringle speaks about, came last night. It contains a very handsome present to me and to Miss Bell Todd. The gift to me is from Mrs P——

herself, and Miss Bell's from Rachel; but that ettercap, Becky Glibbans, is flying through the town like a spunky, mislikening the one and misca'ing the other. Every body, however, kens that it's only spite that gars her speak. It's a great pity that she could na be brought to a sense of religion like her mother, who, in her younger days, they say, was na to seek at a clashing."

Mr Snodgrass expressed his surprise at this account of the faults of that exemplary lady's youth; but he thought of her holy anxiety to sift into the circumstances of Betty, the elder's servant, becoming in one day Mrs Craig, and the same afternoon sending for the midwife, and he prudently made no other comment; for the characters of all preachers were in her hands, and he had the good fortune to stand high in her favour, as a young man of great promise. In order, therefore, to avoid any discussion respecting moral merits, he read the following letter from Andrew Pringle:—

LETTER XXIII.

Andrew Pringle, Esq., to the Reverend Charles Snodgrass.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—London undoubtedly affords the best and the worst specimens of the British character; but there is a certain townish something about the inhabitants in general, of which I find it extremely difficult to convey any idea. Compared with the English of the country, there is apparently very little difference between them; but still there is a difference, and of no small importance in a moral point of view. The country peculiarity is like the bloom of the plum, or the down of the peach, which the fingers of infancy cannot touch without injuring; but this felt but not describable quality of the town character, is as the varnish which brings out more vividly the colours of a picture, and which may be freely and even rudely handled. The women, for example, although as chaste in principle as those of any other community, possess none of that innocent untempted simplicity which is more than half the grace of virtue; many of them, and even young ones too, "in the first

freshness of their virgin beauty," speak of the conduct and vocation of "the erring sisters of the sex," in a manner that often amazes me, and has, in more than one instance, excited unpleasant feelings towards the fair satirists. This moral taint, for I can consider it as nothing less, I have heard defended, but only by men who are supposed to have had a large experience of the world, and who, perhaps, on that account, are not the best judges of female delicacy. "Every woman," as Pope says, "may be at heart a rake;" but it is for the interests of the domestic affections, which are the very elements of virtue, to cherish the notion that women, as they are physically more delicate than men, are also so morally.

But the absence of delicacy, the bloom of virtue, is not peculiar to the females; it is characteristic of all the varieties of the metropolitan mind. The artifices of the medical quacks are things of universal ridicule; but the sin, though in a less gross form, pervades the whole of that sinister system by which much of the superiority of this vast metropolis is supported. The state of the periodical press, that great organ of political instruction—the unruly tongue of liberty—strikingly confirms the justice of this misanthropic remark.

G—— had the kindness, by way of a treat to me, to collect, the other day, at dinner, some of the most eminent editors of the London journals. I found them men of talent, certainly, and much more men of the world, than "the cloistered student from his paling lamp;" but I was astonished to find it considered, tacitly, as a sort of maxim among them, that an intermediate party was not bound by any obligation of honour to withhold, farther than his own discretion suggested, any information of which he was the accidental depositary, whatever the consequences might be to his informant, or to those affected by the communication. In a word, they seemed all to care less about what might be true than what would produce effect, and that effect for their own particular advantage. It is impossible to deny, that if interest is made the criterion by which the confidences of social intercourse are to be respected, the persons who admit this doctrine will have but little respect for the use of names, or deem it any reprehensible delinquency to suppress

truth, or to blazon falsehood. In a word, man in London is not quite so good a creature as he is out of it. The rivalry of interests is here too intense; it impairs the affections, and occasions speculations both in morals and politics, which, I must suspect, it would puzzle a casuist to prove blameless. Can any thing, for example, be more offensive to the calm spectator, than the elections which are now going on? Is it possible that this country, so much smaller in geographical extent than France, and so inferior in natural resources, restricted, too, by those ties and obligations which were thrown off as fetters by that country during the late war, could have attained, in despite of her, such a lofty pre-eminence—become the foremost of all the world—had it not been governed in a manner congenial to the spirit of the people, and with great practical wisdom? It is absurd to assert, that there are no corruptions in the various modifications by which the affairs of the British empire are administered; but it would be difficult to show, that, in the present state of morals and interests among mankind, corruption is not a necessary evil. I do not mean necessary, as evolved from those morals and interests, but necessary to the management of political trusts. I am afraid, however, to insist on this, as the natural integrity of your own heart, and the dignity of your vocation, will alike induce you to condemn it as Machiavellian. It is, however, an observation forced on me by what I have seen here.

It would be invidious, perhaps, to criticize the different candidates for the representation of London and Westminster very severely. I think it must be granted that they are as sincere in their professions as their opponents, which at least bleaches away much of that turpitude of which their political conduct is accused by those who are of a different way of thinking. But it is quite evident, at least to me, that no government could exist a week, managed with that subjection to public opinion to which Sir Francis Burdett and Mr Hobhouse apparently submit; and it is no less certain, that no government ought to exist a single day that would act in complete defiance of public opinion.

I was surprised to find Sir Francis Burdett an uncommonly mild and gentlemanly-looking man. I had pictured somehow to my imagination a dark and morose character; but, on the

contrary, in his appearance, deportment, and manner of speaking, he is eminently qualified to attract popular applause. His style of speaking is not particularly oratorical, but he has the art of saying bitter things in a sweet way. In his language, however, although pungent, and sometimes even eloquent, he is singularly incorrect. He cannot utter a sequence of three sentences without violating common grammar in the most atrocious way; and his tropes and figures are so distorted, hashed, and broken—such a patchwork of different patterns—that you are bewildered if you attempt to make them out; but the earnestness of his manner, and a certain fitness of character in his observations, a kind of Shaksperian pithiness, redeem all this. Besides, his manifold blunders of syntax do not offend the taste of those audiences where he is heard with the most approbation.

Hobhouse speaks more correctly, but he lacks in the conciliatory advantages of personal appearance; and his physiognomy, though indicating considerable strength of mind, is not so prepossessing. He is evidently a man of more education than his friend—that is, of more reading, perhaps also of more various observation—but he has less genius. His tact is coarser, and though he speaks with more vehemence, he seldomer touches the sensibilities of his auditors. He may have observed mankind in general more extensively than Sir Francis; but he is far less acquainted with the feelings and associations of the English mind. There is also a wariness about him, which I do not like so well as the imprudent ingenuousness of the baronet. He seems to me to have a cause in hand—Hobhouse *versus* Existing Circumstances—and that he considers the multitude as the jurors, on whose decision his advancement in life depends.—But in this I may be uncharitable. I should, however, think more highly of his sincerity as a patriot, if his stake in the country were greater; and yet, I doubt, if his stake were greater, if he is that sort of man who would have cultivated popularity in Westminster. He seems to me to have qualified himself for Parliament, as others do for the bar, and that he will probably be considered in the House, for some time, merely as a political adventurer. But if he has the talent and prudence requisite to ensure distinction in the line of his profession, the medio-

crity of his original condition will reflect honour on his success, should he hereafter acquire influence and consideration as a statesman. Of his literary talents I know you do not think very highly, nor am I inclined to rank the powers of his mind much beyond those of any common well-educated English gentleman. But it will soon be ascertained whether his pretensions to represent Westminster be justified by a sense of conscious superiority, or only prompted by that ambition which overleaps itself.

Of Wood, who was twice lord mayor, I know not what to say. There is a queer and wily cast in his pale countenance, that puzzles me exceedingly. In common parlance I would call him an empty vain creature; but when I look at that indescribable spirit, which indicates a strange and out-of-the-way manner of thinking, I humbly confess that he is no common man. He is evidently a person of no intellectual accomplishments: he has neither the language nor the deportment of a gentleman, in the usual understanding of the term; and yet there is something that I would almost call genius about him. It is not cunning, it is not wisdom, it is far from being prudence; and yet it is something as wary as prudence, as effectual as wisdom, and not less sinister than cunning. I would call it intuitive skill, a sort of instinct, by which he is enabled to attain his ends in defiance of a capacity naturally narrow, a judgment that topples with vanity, and an address at once mean and repulsive. To call him a great man, in any possible approximation of the word, would be ridiculous; that he is a good one, will be denied by those who envy his success, or hate his politics; but nothing, save the blindness of fanaticism, can call in question his possession of a rare and singular species of ability, let it be exerted in what cause it may.—But my paper is full, and I have only room to subscribe myself, faithfully yours,

A. PRINGLE.

“It appears to us,” said Mr Snodgrass, as he folded up the letter to return it to his pocket, “that the Londoners, with all their advantages of information, are neither purer nor better than their fellow-subjects in the country.”—“As to their better-

ness," replied Miss Mally, "I have a notion that they are far waur; and I hope you do not think that earthly knowledge or any sort has a tendency to make mankind, or womankind either, any better; for was not Solomon, who had more of it than any other man, a type and testification, that knowledge without grace is but vanity?" The young clergyman was somewhat startled at this application of a remark on which he laid no particular stress, and was thankful in his heart that Mrs Glibbans was not present. He was not aware that Miss Mally had an orthodox corn, or bunyan that could as little bear a touch from the royne-slippers of philosophy, as the inflamed gout of polemical controversy, which had gumfiated every mental joint and member of that zealous prop of the 'Relief Kirk. This was indeed the tender point of Miss Mally's character; for she was left unplucked on the stalk of single blessedness, owing entirely to a conversation on this very subject with the only lover she ever had, Mr Dalgliesh, formerly helper in the neighbouring parish of Dintonknow. He happened incidentally to observe, that education was requisite to promote the interests of religion. But Miss Mally on that occasion jocularly maintained, that education had only a tendency to promote the sale of books. This, Mr Dalgliesh thought, was a sneer at himself, he having some time before unfortunately published a short tract, entitled—"The Moral Union of our Temporal and Eternal Interests Considered, with respect to the Establishment of Parochial Seminaries," and which fell still-born from the press. He therefore retorted with some acrimony, until, from less to more, Miss Mally ordered him to keep his distance; upon which he bounced out of the room, and they were never afterwards on speaking terms. Saving, however, and excepting this particular dogma, Miss Mally was on all other topics as liberal and beneficent as could be expected from a maiden lady, who was obliged to eke out her stinted income with a nimble needle and a close-clipping economy. The conversation with Mr Snodgrass was not, however, lengthened into acrimony; for immediately after the remark which we have noticed, she proposed that they should call on Miss Isabella Todd to see Rachel's letter; indeed, this was rendered necessary by the state of the fire, for after boiling the kettle she had allowed

it to fall low. It was her nightly practice after tea to take her evening seam, in a friendly way, to some of her neighbours' houses, by which she saved both coal and candle, while she acquired the news of the day, and was occasionally invited to stay supper.

On their arrival at Mrs Todd's, Miss Isabella understood the purport of their visit, and immediately produced her letter, receiving, at the same time, a perusal of Mr Andrew Pringle's. Mrs Pringle's to Miss Mally she had previously seen.

LETTER XXIV.

Miss Rachel Pringle to Miss Isabella Todd.

MY DEAR BELL,—Since my last, we have undergone great changes and vicissitudes. Last week we removed to our present house, which is exceedingly handsome and elegantly furnished; and on Saturday there was an insurrection of the servants, on account of my mother not allowing them to have their dinners served up at the usual hour for servants at other genteel houses. We have also had the legacy in the funds transferred to my father, and only now wait the settling of the final accounts, which will yet take some time. On the day that the transfer took place, my mother made me a present of a twenty-pound note, to lay out in any way I thought fit, and in so doing I could not but think of you; I have, therefore, in a box which she is sending to Miss Mally Glencairn, sent you an evening dress from Mrs Bean's, one of the most fashionable and tasteful dressmakers in town, which I hope you will wear with pleasure for my sake. I have got one exactly like it, so that, when you see yourself in the glass, you will behold in what state I appeared at Lady ——'s route.

Ah! my dear Bell, how much are our expectations disappointed! How often have we, with admiration and longing wonder, read the descriptions in the newspapers of the fashionable parties in this great metropolis, and thought of the Grecian lamps, the ottomans, the promenades, the ornamented floors, the cut glass, the coup-d'œil, and the tout-ensemble. "Alas!" as

Young the poet says, "the things unseen do not deceive us." I have seen more beauty at an Irvine ball, than all the fashionable world could bring to market at my Lady ——'s emporium for the disposal of young ladies, for indeed I can consider it as nothing else.

I went with the Argents. The hall-door was open, and filled with the servants in their state liveries; but although the door was open, the porter, as each carriage came up, rung a peal upon the knocker, to announce to all the square the successive arrival of the guests. We were shown up stairs to the drawing-rooms. They were very well, but neither so grand nor so great as I expected. As for the company, it was a suffocating crowd of fat elderly gentlewomen, and misses that stood in need of all the charms of their fortunes. One thing I could notice—for the press was so great, little could be seen—it was, that the old ladies wore rouge. The white satin sleeve of my dress was entirely ruined by coming in contact with a little round, dumping duchess's cheek—as vulgar a body as could well be. She seemed to me to have spent all her days behind a counter, smirking thankfulness to bawbee customers.

When we had been shown in the drawing-rooms to the men for some time, we then adjourned to the lower apartments, where the refreshments were set out. This, I suppose, is arranged to afford an opportunity to the beaux to be civil to the belles, and thereby to scrape acquaintance with those whom they approve, by assisting them to the delicacies. Altogether, it was a very dull well-dressed affair, and yet I ought to have been in good spirits, for Sir Marmaduke Towler, a great Yorkshire baronet, was most particular in his attentions to me; indeed, so much so, that I saw it made poor Sabre very uneasy. I do not know why it should, for I have given him no positive encouragement to hope for any thing; not that I have the least idea that the baronet's attentions were more than common-place politeness, but he has since called. I cannot, however, say, that my vanity is at all flattered by this circumstance. At the same time, there surely could be no harm in Sir Marmaduke making me an offer, for you know I am not bound to accept it. Besides, my father does not like him, and my mother thinks he's a fortune-hunter;

but I cannot conceive how that may be, for, on the contrary, he is said to be rather extravagant.

Before we return to Scotland, it is intended that we shall visit some of the watering-places; and, perhaps, if Andrew can manage it with my father, we may even take a trip to Paris. The doctor himself is not averse to it; but my mother is afraid that a new war may break out, and that we may detained prisoners. This fantastical fear, we shall, however, try to overcome. But I am interrupted. Sir Marmaduke is in the drawing-room, and I am summoned.—Yours truly,

RACHEL PRINGLE.

When Mr Snodgrass had read this letter, he paused for a moment, and then said dryly, in handing it to Miss Isabella, "Miss Pringle is improving in the ways of the world."

The evening by this time was far advanced, and the young clergyman was not desirous to renew the conversation; he therefore almost immediately took his leave, and walked sedately towards Garnock, debating with himself, as he went along, whether Dr Pringle's family were likely to be benefited by their legacy. But he had scarcely passed the minister's carse, when he met with Mrs Glibbans returning. "Mr Snodgrass! Mr Snodgrass!" cried that ardent matron from her side of the road to the other where he was walking, and he obeyed her call; "yon's no sic a black story as I thought. Mrs Craig is to be sure far gane, but they were married in December; and it was only because she was his servan' lass that the worthy man didna like to own her at first for his wife. It would have been dreadful had the matter been jealousied at the first. She gaed to Glasgow to see an auntie that she has there, and he gaed in to fetch her out, and it was then the marriage was made up, which I was glad to hear; for oh! Mr Snodgrass, it would have been an awfu' judgment had a man like Mr Craig turn't out no better than a Tam Paine or a Major Weir. But a's for the best; and Him that has the power of salvation can blot out all our iniquities. So good-night—ye'll have a lang walk."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE QUEEN'S TRIAL.

As the spring advanced, the beauty of the country around Garnock was gradually unfolded; the blossom was unclosed, while the church was embraced within the foliage of more umbrageous boughs. The school-boys from the adjacent villages were, on the Saturday afternoons, frequently seen angling along the banks of the Lugton, which ran clearer beneath the church-yard wall, and the hedge of the minister's glebe; and the evenings were so much lengthened, that the occasional visitors at the manse could prolong their walk after tea. These, however, were less numerous than when the family were at home; but still Mr Snodgrass, when the weather was fine, had no reason to deplore the loneliness of his bachelor's court.

It happened that, one fair and sunny afternoon, Miss Mally Glencairn and Miss Isabella Todd came to the manse. Mrs Glibbans and her daughter Becky were the same day paying their first ceremonious visit, as the matron called it, to Mr and Mrs Craig, with whom the whole party were invited to take tea; and, for lack of more amusing chit-chat, the reverend young gentleman read to them the last letter which he had received from Mr Andrew Pringle. It was conjured naturally enough out of his pocket, by an observation of Miss Mally's. "Nothing surprises me," said that amiable maiden lady, "so much as the health and good humour of the commonality. It is a joyous refutation of the opinion, that the comfort and happiness of this life depends on the wealth of worldly possessions."

"It is so," replied Mr Snodgrass, "and I do often wonder, when I see the blithe and hearty children of the cottars, frolicking in the abundance of health and hilarity, where the means come from to enable their poor industrious parents to supply their wants."

"How can you wonder at any sic things, Mr Snodgrass? Do they not come from on high," said Mrs Glibbans, "whence

cometh every good and perfect gift? Is there not the flowers of the field, which neither card nor spin; and yet Solomon, in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these?"

"I was not speaking in a spiritual sense," interrupted the other, "but merely made the remark, as introductory to a letter which I have received from Mr Andrew Pringle, respecting some of the ways of living in London."

Mrs Craig, who had been so recently translated from the kitchen to the parlour, pricked up her ears at this, not doubting that the letter would contain something very grand and wonderful, and exclaimed, "Gude safe's, let's hear't!—I'm unco fond to ken about London, and the king and the queen; but I believe they are baith dead noo."

Miss Becky Glibbans gave a satirical keckle at this, and showed her superior learning, by explaining to Mrs Craig the unbroken nature of the kingly office. Mr Snodgrass then read as follows:—

LETTER XXV

Andrew Pringle, Esq., to the Rev. Charles Snodgrass.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You are not aware of the task you impose, when you request me to send you some account of the general way of living in London. Unless you come here, and actually experience yourself what I would call the London ache, it is impossible to supply you with any adequate idea of the necessity that exists in this wilderness of mankind, to seek refuge in society, without being over fastidious with respect to the intellectual qualifications of your occasional associates. In a remote desert, the solitary traveller is subject to apprehensions of danger; but still he is the most important thing "within the circle of that lonely waste;" and the sense of his own dignity enables him to sustain the shock of considerable hazard with spirit and fortitude. But, in London, the feeling of self-importance is totally lost and suppressed in the bosom of a stranger. A painful conviction of insignificance—of nothingness, I may say—is sunk upon his heart, and murmured in his ear by the

million, who divide with him that consequence which he unconsciously before supposed he possessed in a general estimate of the world. While elbowing my way through the unknown multitude that flows between Charing-Cross and the Royal Exchange, this mortifying sense of my own insignificance has often come upon me with the energy of a pang; and I have thought, that, after all we can say of any man, the effect of the greatest influence of an individual on society at large, is but as that of a pebble thrown into the sea. Mathematically speaking, the undulations which the pebble causes, continue until the whole mass of the ocean has been disturbed to the bottom of its most secret depths and farthest shores; and, perhaps, with equal truth it may be affirmed, that the sentiments of the man of genius are also infinitely propagated; but how soon is the physical impression of the one lost to every sensible perception, and the moral impulse of the other swallowed up from all practical effect!

But though London, in the general, may be justly compared to the vast and restless ocean, or to any other thing that is either sublime, incomprehensible, or affecting, it loses all its influence over the solemn associations of the mind when it is examined in its details. For example, living on the town, as it is slangishly called, the most friendless and isolated condition possible, is yet fraught with an amazing diversity of enjoyment. Thousands of gentlemen, who have survived the relish of active fashionable pursuits, pass their life in that state without tasting the delight of one new sensation. They rise in the morning merely because Nature will not allow them to remain longer in bed. They begin the day without motive or purpose, and close it after having performed the same unvaried round as the most thoroughbred domestic animal that ever dwelt in manse or manor-house. If you ask them at three o'clock where they are to dine, they cannot tell you; but about the wonted dinner hour, batches of these forlorn bachelors find themselves diurnally congregated, as if by instinct, around a cozy table in some snug coffeehouse, where, after inspecting the contents of the bill of fare, they discuss the news of the day, reserving the scandal, by way of dessert, for their wine. Day after day their respective political opinions give rise to keen encounters, but without producing the slightest

shade of change in any of their old ingrained and particular sentiments.

Some of their haunts—I mean those frequented by the elderly race—are shabby enough in their appearance and circumstances, except, perhaps, in the quality of the wine. Every thing in them is regulated by an ancient and precise economy, and you perceive, at the first glance, that all is calculated on the principle of the house giving as much for the money as it can possibly afford, without infringing those little etiquettes which persons of gentlemanly habits regard as essentials. At half price the junior members of these unorganized or natural clubs retire to the theatres, while the elder brethren mend their potations till it is time to go home. This seems a very comfortless way of life; but I have no doubt it is the preferred result of a long experience of the world, and that the parties, upon the whole, find it superior, according to their early formed habits of dissipation and gayety, to the sedate, but not more regular course, of a domestic circle.

The chief pleasure, however, of living on the town, consists in accidentally falling in with persons whom it might be otherwise difficult to meet in private life. I have several times enjoyed this. The other day I fell in with an old gentleman, evidently a man of some consequence, for he came to the coffeehouse in his own carriage. It happened that we were the only guests; and he proposed that we should therefore dine together. In the course of conversation it came out, that he had been familiarly acquainted with Garrick, and had frequented the Literary Club in the days of Johnson and Goldsmith. In his youth, I conceive, he must have been an amusing companion; for his fancy was exceedingly lively, and his manners altogether afforded a very favourable specimen of the old, the gentlemanly school. At an appointed hour his carriage came for him, and we parted, perhaps never to meet again.

Such agreeable incidents, however, are not common, as the frequenters of the coffeehouses are, I think, usually taciturn characters, and averse to conversation. I may, however, be myself in fault. Our countrymen, in general, whatever may be their address in improving acquaintance to the promotion of

their own interests, have not the best way, in the first instance, of introducing themselves. A raw Scotchman, contrasted with a sharp Londoner, is very inadroit and awkward, be his talents what they may; and I suspect, that even the most brilliant of your old class-fellows have, in their professional visits to this metropolis, had some experience of what I mean.

ANDREW PRINGLE.

When Mr Snodgrass paused, and was folding up the letter, Mrs Craig, bending with her hands on her knees, said, emphatically, "Noo, sir, what think you of that?" He was not, however, quite prepared to give an answer to a question so abruptly propounded, nor, indeed, did he exactly understand to what particular the lady referred. "For my part," she resumed, recovering her previous posture—"For my part, it's a very caldrife way of life to dine every day on coffee; broth and beef would put mair smeddum in the men; they're just a wheen auld foggies that Mr Andrew describes, an' no worth a single woman's pains."—"Wheesht, wheesht, mistress," cried Mr Craig; "ye maunna let your tongue rin awa with your sense in that gait."—"It has but a licht load," said Miss Becky, whispering Isabella Todd. In this juncture, Mr Micklewham happened to come in, and Mrs Craig, on seeing him, cried out, "I hope, Mr Micklewham, ye have brought the doctor's letter;—he's such a funny man! and touches off the Londoners to the nines."

"He's a good man," said Mrs Glibbans, in a tone calculated to repress the forwardness of Mrs Craig; but Miss Mally Glencairn having, in the meanwhile, taken from her pocket an epistle which she had received the preceding day from Mrs Pringle, Mr Snodgrass silenced all controversy on that score, by requesting her to proceed with the reading. "She's a clever woman, Mrs Pringle," said Mrs Craig, who was resolved to cut a figure in the conversation in her own house. "She's a discreet woman, and may be as godly, too, as some that make mair wark about the elect." Whether Mrs Glibbans thought this had any allusion to herself, is not susceptible of legal proof; but she turned round and looked at their "most kind hostess" with a sneer that might almost merit the appellation of a snort. Mrs Craig, how-

ever, pacified her by proposing, "that, before hearing the letter they should take a dram of wine, or pree her cherry bounce"—adding. "our maister likes a bein house, and ye a' ken that we are providing for a handling." The wine was, accordingly, served, and, in due time, Miss Mally Glencairn edified and instructed the party with the contents of Mrs Pringle's letter.

LETTER XXVI.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Mally Glencairn.

DEAR MISS MALLY,—You will have heard, by the peppers, of the gret hobleshow heer about the queen's coming over contrary to the will of the nation; and that the king and parlement are so angry with her, that they are going to put her away by giving to her a bill of divorce. The doctor, who has been searchin the Scriptures on the okashon, says this is not in their poor, although she was found guilty of the fact; but I tell him, that as the king and parlement of old took upon them to change our religion, I do not see how they will be hampered now by the word of God.

You may well wonder that I have no ritten to you about the king, and what he is like; but we have never got a sight of him at all, whilk is a gret shame, paying so dear as we do for a king, who shurely should be a publik man. But we have seen her majesty, who stays not far from our house heer in Baker Street, in dry lodgings, which, I am creditably informed, she is obligated to pay for by the week, for nobody will trust her; so you see what it is, Miss Mally, to have a light character. Poor woman! they say she might have been going from door to door, with a staff and a meal-pock, but for ane Mr Wood, who is a baillie of London, that has ta'en her by the hand. She's a woman advanced in life, with a short neck and a pented face; housomever, that, I suppose, she canno help, being a queen, and obligated to set the fashons to the court, where it is necessar to hide their faces with pent, our Andrew says, that their looks may not betray them—there being no shurer thing than a false-hearted courtier.

But what concerns me the most in all this is, that there will be no coronashon till the queen is put out of the way—and nobody can take upon them to say when that will be, as the law is so dootful and endless—which I am verra sorry for, as it was my intent to rite Miss Nanny Eydent a true account of the coronashon, in case there had been any partiklars that might be servisable to her in her bisness.

The doctor and me, by ourselves, since we have been settlt, go about at our convenience, and have seen far mae farlies than baith Andrew and Rachel, with all the acquaintance they have forgathert with—but you no old heeds canno be expectit on young shouthers, and they have not had the experience of the world that we have had.

The lamps in the streets here are lighted with gauze, and not with crusies, like those that have lately been put up in your toun; and it is brought in pips aneath the ground from the manufactors, which the doctor and me have been to see—an awful place—and they say as fey to a spark as poother, which made us glad to get out o't when we heard so;—and we have been to see a brewhouse, where they mak the London porter, but it is a sight not to be told. In it we saw a barrel, whilk the doctor said was by gauging bigger than the Irvine muckle kirk, and a masking fat, like a barn for mugnited. But all thae were as nothing to a curiosity of a steam-ngine, that minches minch-collops as natural as life—and stuffs the sosogees itself, in a manner past the poor of nature to consiv. They have, to be shure, in London, many things to help work; for in our kitchen there is a smoking-jack to roast the meat, that gangs of its oun free will, and the brisker the fire the faster it runs; but a potatoe-beetle is not to be had within the four walls of London, which is a great want in a house; Mrs Argent never hard of sic a thing.

Me and the doctor have likewise been in the houses of parliament, and the doctor since has been again to heer the argolbargoling about the queen. But, cepting the king's throne, which is all gold and velvet, with a croun on the top, and stars all round, there was nothing worth the looking at in them baith. —Howsomever, I sat in the king's seat, and in the preses chair

of the House of Commons, which, you no, is something for me to say; and we have been to see the printing of books, where the very smallest dividual syllib is taken up by itself and made into words by the hand, so as to be quite confounding how it could ever read sense.—But there is ane piece of industry and froughalaty I should not forget, whilk is wives going about with whirl-barrows, selling horses flesh to the cats and dogs by weight, and the cats and dogs know them very well by their voices. In short, Miss Mally, there is nothing heer that the hand is not turnt to; and there is, I can see, a better order and method really among the Londoners than among our Scotch folks, notwithstanding their advantages of edicashion; but my pepper will hold no more at present, from your true friend,

JANET PRINGLE.

There was a considerable diversity of opinion among the commentators on this epistle. Mrs Craig was the first who broke silence, and displayed a great deal of erudition on the minch-collop engine and the potatoe-beetle, in which she was interrupted by the indignant Mrs Glibbans, who exclaimed, “I am surprised to hear you, Mrs Craig, speak of sic baubles, when the word of God’s in danger of being controverted by an act of parliament! But, Mr Snodgrass, dinna ye think that this painting of the queen’s face is a Jezebitical testification against her?” Mr Snodgrass replied, with an unwonted sobriety of manner, and with an emphasis that showed he intended to make some impression on his auditors—“It is impossible to judge correctly of strangers by measuring them according to our own notions of propriety. It has certainly long been a practice in courts to disfigure the beauty of the human countenance with paint; but what, in itself, may have been originally assumed for a mask or disguise, may, by usage, have grown into a very harmless custom. I am not, therefore, disposed to attach any criminal importance to the circumstance of her majesty wearing paint. Her late majesty did so herself.”—“I do not say it was criminal,” said Mrs Glibbans; “I only meant it was sinful, and I think it is.” The accent of authority in which this was said, prevented Mr Snodgrass from offering any reply; and, a brief

pause ensuing, Miss Mally Glencairn observed, that it was a surprising thing how the doctor and Mrs Pringle managed their matters so well. "Ay," said Mrs Craig, "but we a' ken what a manager the mistress is—she's the bee that mak's the hiney—she does not gang bizzing aboot, like a thriftless wasp, through her neighbours' houses."—"I tell you, Betty, my dear," cried Mr Craig, "that you shouldna make comparisons—what's past is gane—and Mrs Glibbans and you maun now be friends."—"They're a' friends to me that's no faes, and am very glad to see Mrs Glibbans sociable in my house; but she needna hae made sae light of me when she was here before." And, in saying this, the amiable hostess burst into a loud sob of sorrow, which induced Mr Snodgrass to beg Mr Micklewham to read the doctor's letter, by which a happy stop was put to the further manifestation of the grudge which Mrs Craig harboured against Mrs Glibbans for the lecture she had received, on what the latter called "the incarnated effect of a more than Potipharian claught o' the godly Mr Craig."

LETTER XXVII.

The Rev. Z. Pringle, D.D., to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster and Session-clerk of Garnock.

DEAR SIR,—I had a great satisfaction in hearing that Mr Snodgrass, in my place, prays for the queen on the Lord's day, which liberty, to do in our national church, is a thing to be upholden with a fearless spirit, even with the spirit of martyrdom, that we may not bow down in Scotland to the prelatie Baal of an order in council, whereof the archbishop of Canterbury, that is cousin-german to the pope of Rome, is art and part. Verily, the sending forth of that order to the General Assembly was treachery to the solemn oath of the new king, whereby he took the vows upon him, conform to the Articles of the Union, to maintain the Church of Scotland as by law established; so that for the archbishop of Canterbury to meddle therein was a shooting out of the horns of aggressive domination.

I think it is right of me to testify thus much, through you, to

the session, that the elders may stand on their posts to bar all such breaking in of the Episcopalian boar into our corner of the vineyard.

Anent the queen's case and condition, I say nothing; for be she guilty, or be she innocent, we all know that she was born in sin, and brought forth in iniquity—prone to evil, as the sparks fly upwards—and desperately wicked, like you and me, or any other poor Christian sinner, which is reason enough to make us think of her in the remembering prayer.

Since she came over, there has been a wonderful work doing here; and it is thought that the crown will be taken off her head by a strong handling of the parliament; and really, when I think of the bishops sitting high in the peerage, like owls and rooks in the bartisans of an old tower, I have my fears that they can bode her no good. I have seen them in the House of Lords, clothed in their idolatrous robes; and when I looked at them so proudly placed at the right hand of the king's throne, and on the side of the powerful, egging on, as I saw one of them doing in a whisper, the Lord Liverpool, before he rose to speak against the queen, the blood ran cold in my veins; and I thought of their woeful persecutions of our national church, and prayed inwardly that I might be keepit in the humility of a zealous presbyter, and that the corruption of the frail human nature within me might never be tempted by the pampered whoredoms of prelacy.

Saving the Lord Chancellor, all the other temporal peers were just as they had come in from the crown of the causey—none of them having a judicial garment, which was a shame; and, as for the chancellor's long robe, it was not so good as my own gown; but he is said to be a very narrow man. What he spoke, however, was no doubt sound law; yet I could observe he has a bad custom of taking the name of God in vain, which I wonder at, considering he has such a kittle conscience, which, on less occasions, causes him often to shed tears.

Mrs Pringle and me, by ourselves, had a fine quiet canny sight of the queen out of the window of a pastry-baxter's shop, opposite to where her majesty stays. She seems to be a plump and jocose little woman; gleg, blithe, and throwgaun for her years, and on an easy footing with the lower orders—coming to

the window when they call for her, and becking to them, which is very civil of her, and gets them to take her part against the government.

The baxter in whose shop we saw this, told us that her majesty said, on being invited to take her dinner at an inn on the road from Dover, that she would be content with a mutton-chop at the King's-Arms in London,* which shows that she is a lady of a very hamely disposition. Mrs Pringle thought her not big enough for a queen; but we cannot expect every one to be like that bright occidental star, Queen Elizabeth, whose effigy we have seen preserved in armour in the Tower of London, and in wax in Westminster Abbey, where they have a living-like likeness of Lord Nelson; in the very identical regimentals that he was killed in. They are both wonderful places, but it costs a power of money to get through them, and all the folk about them think of nothing but money; for when I inquired, with a reverent spirit, seeing around me the tombs of great and famous men, the mighty and wise of their day, what department it was of the Abbey—"It's the eighteen-pence department," said an uncircumcised Philistine, with as little respect as if we had been treading the courts of the darling Dagon.

Our concerns here are now drawing to a close; but before we return, we are going for a short time to a town on the sea-side, which they call Brighton. We had a notion of taking a trip to Paris, but that we must leave to Andrew Pringle, my son, and his sister Rachel, if the bit lassie could get a decent gudeman, which may be will cast up for her before we leave London. Nothing, however, is settled as yet upon that head; so I can say no more at present anent the same.

Since the affair of the sermon, I have withdrawn myself from trafficking so much as I did in the missionary and charitable ploys that are so in vogue with the pious here, which will be all the better for my own people, as I will keep for them what I was giving to the unknown; and it is my design to write a book on almsgiving, to show in what manner that Christian duty

* The honest doctor's version of this bon-mot of her majesty is not quite correct; her expression was, "I mean to take a chop at the King's-Head when I get to London."

may be best fulfilled, which I doubt not will have the effect of opening the eyes of many in London to the true nature of the thing by which I was myself beguiled in this Vanity Fair, like a bird ensnared by the fowler.

I was concerned to hear of poor Mr Witherspoon's accident, in falling from his horse in coming from the Dalmailing occasion. How thankful he must be, that the Lord made his head of a durability to withstand the shock, which might otherwise have fractured his skull! What you say about the promise of the braird, gives me pleasure on account of the poor; but what will be done with the farmers and their high rents, if the harvest turn out so abundant? Great reason have I to be thankful that the legacy has put me out of the reverence of my stipend; for when the meal was cheap, I own to you that I felt my carnality grudging the horn of abundance that the Lord was then pouring into the lap of the earth. In short, Mr Micklewham, I doubt it is o'er true with us all, that the less we are tempted, the better we are; so with my sincere prayers that you may be delivered from all evil, and led out of the paths of temptation, whether it is on the highway, or on the footpaths, or beneath the hedges, I remain, dear sir, your friend and pastor,

ZACHARIAH PRINGLE.

"The doctor," said Mrs Glibbans, as the schoolmaster concluded, "is there like himself—a true orthodox Christian, standing up for the word, and overflowing with charity even for the sinner. But, Mr Snodgrass, I did not ken before that the bishops had a hand in the making of the acts of the parliament. I think, Mr Snodgrass, if that be the case, there should be some doubt in Scotland about obeying them. However that may be, sure am I that the queen, though she was a perfect Deliah, has nothing to fear from them; for have we not read in the Book of Martyrs, and other church histories, of their concubines, and indulgences, in the papist times, to all manner of carnal iniquity? But if she be that noghty woman that they say"— "Gude safe's," cried Mrs Craig, "if she be a noghty woman, awa' wi' her, awa' wi' her! Wha kens the cantrips she may play us?"

Here Miss Mally Glencairn interposed, and informed Mrs Craig that a noghty woman was not, as she seemed to think, a witch-wife. "I am sure," said Miss Becky Glibbans, "that Mrs Craig might have known that."—"Oh, ye're a spiteful deevil!" whispered Miss Mally, with a smile to her; and, turning in the same moment to Miss Isabella Todd, begged her to read Miss Pringle's letter—a motion which Mr Snodgrass seconded, chiefly to abridge the conversation, during which, though he wore a serene countenance, he often suffered much.

LETTER XXVIII.

Miss Rachel Pringle to Miss Isabella Todd.

MY DEAR BELL,—I am much obliged by your kind expressions for my little present. I hope soon to send you something better, and gloves at the same time; for Sabre has been brought to the point by an alarm for the Yorkshire baronet, that I mentioned as showing symptoms of the tender passion for my fortune. The friends on both sides being satisfied with the match, it will take place as soon as some preliminary arrangements are made. When we are settled, I hope your mother will allow you to come and spend some time with us at our country seat in Berkshire; and I shall be happy to repay all the expenses of your journey, as a jaunt to England is what your mother would, I know, never consent to pay for.

It is proposed that, immediately after the ceremony, we shall set out for France, accompanied by my brother, where we are to be soon after joined at Paris by some of the Argents, who, I can see, think Andrew worth the catching for Miss. My father and mother will then return to Scotland; but whether the doctor will continue to keep his parish, or give it up to Mr Snodgrass, will depend greatly on the circumstances in which he finds his parishioners. This is all the domestic intelligence I have got to give; but its importance will make up for other deficiencies.

As to the continuance of our discoveries in London, I know not well what to say. Every day brings something new; but

we lose the sense of novelty. Were a fire in the same street where we live, it would no longer alarm me. A few nights ago, as we were sitting in the parlour after supper, the noise of an engine passing startled us all; we ran to the windows—there was haste, and torches, and the sound of other engines, and all the horrors of a conflagration reddening the skies. My father sent out the footboy to enquire where it was; and when the boy came back, he made us laugh, by snapping his fingers, and saying the fire was not worth so much—although, upon farther enquiry, we learned that the house in which it originated was burned to the ground. You see, therefore, how the bustle of this great world hardens the sensibilities; but I trust its influence will never extend to my heart.

The principal topic of conversation at present is about the queen. The Argents, who are our main instructors in the proprieties of London life, say, that it would be very vulgar in me to go to look at her, which I am sorry for, as I wish above all things to see a personage so illustrious by birth, and renowned by misfortune. The doctor and my mother, who are less scrupulous, and who, in consequence, somehow, by themselves, contrive to see and get into places that are inaccessible to all gentility, have had a full view of her majesty. My father has since become her declared partizan, and my mother too has acquired a leaning likewise towards her side of the question; but neither of them will permit the subject to be spoken of before me, as they consider it detrimental to good morals. I, however, read the newspapers.

What my brother thinks of her majesty's case is not easy to divine; but Sabre is convinced of the queen's guilt, upon some private and authentic information which a friend of his, who has returned from Italy, heard when travelling in that country. This information he has not, however, repeated to me; so that it must be very bad. We shall know all when the trial comes on. In the mean time, his majesty, who has lived in dignified retirement since he came to the throne, has taken up his abode, with rural felicity, in a cottage in Windsor Forest; where he now, contemning all the pomp and follies of his youth, and this metropolis, passes his days amidst his cabbages, like Dioclesian,

with innocence and tranquillity, far from the intrigues of courtiers, and insensible to the murmuring waves of the fluctuating populace, that set in with so strong a current towards "the mob-led queen," as the divine Shakspeare has so beautifully expressed it.

You ask me about Vauxhall Gardens. I have not seen them they are no longer in fashion. The theatres are quite vulgar. Even the opera-house has sunk into a second-rate place of resort. Almack's balls, the Argyle rooms, and the Philharmonic concerts, are the only public entertainments frequented by people of fashion ; and this high superiority they owe entirely to the difficulty of gaining admission. London, as my brother says, is too rich, and grown too luxurious, to have any exclusive place of fashionable resort, where price alone is the obstacle. Hence, the institution of these select aristocratic assemblies. The Philharmonic concerts, however, are rather professional than fashionable entertainments ; but every body is fond of music, and, therefore, every body that can be called any body, is anxious to get tickets to them ; and this anxiety has given them a degree of eclat which, I am persuaded, the performance would never have excited had the tickets been purchaseable at any price. The great thing here is, either to be somebody, or to be patronized by a person that is a somebody. Without this, though you were as rich as Cræsus, your golden chariots, like the comets of a season, blazing and amazing, would speedily roll away into the obscurity from which they came, and be remembered no more.

At first when we came here, and when the amount of our legacy was first promulgated, we were in a terrible flutter. Andrew became a man of fashion, with all the haste that tailors, and horses, and dinners, could make him. My father, honest man, was equally inspired with lofty ideas, and began a career that promised a liberal benefaction of good things to the poor ; and my mother was almost distracted with calculations about laying out the money to the best advantage, and the sum she would allow to be spent. I alone preserved my natural equanimity ; and, foreseeing the necessity of new accomplishments to suit my altered circumstances, applied myself to the instructions

of my masters, with an assiduity that won their applause. The advantages of this I now experience. My brother is sobered from his champagne fumes; my father has found out that charity begins at home; and my mother, though her establishment is enlarged, finds her happiness, notwithstanding the legacy, still lies within the little circle of her household cares. Thus, my dear Bell, have I proved the sweets of a true philosophy; and, unseduced by the blandishments of rank, rejected Sir Marmaduke Towler, and accepted the humbler but more disinterested swain, Captain Sabre, who requests me to send you his compliments, not altogether content that you should occupy so much of the bosom of your affectionate

RACHEL PRINGLE.

“Rachel had aye a gude roose of hersel’,” said Becky Glibbans, as Miss Isabella concluded. In the same moment, Mr Snodgrass took his leave, saying to Mr Micklewham that he had something particular to mention to him. “What can it be about?” enquired Mrs Glibbans at Mr Craig, as soon as the helper and schoolmaster had left the room: “Do you think it can be concerning the doctor’s resignation of the parish in his favour?”—“I’m sure,” interposed Mrs Craig, before her husband could reply, “it winna be wi’ my gude-will that he shall come in upon us—a pridefu’ wight, whose saft words, and a’ his politeness, are but lip-deep; na, na, Mrs Glibbans, we maun hae another on the leet forbye him.”

“And wha would ye put on the leet noo, Mrs Craig, you that’s sic a judge?” said Mrs Glibbans, with the most ineffable consequentiality.

“I’ll be for young Mr Dirlton, who is baith a sappy preacher of the word, and a substantial hand at every kind of civility.”

“Young Dirlton!—young Deevilton!” cried the orthodox Deborah of Irvine; “a fallow that knows no more of a gospel dispensation than I do of the Arian heresy, which I hold in utter abomination. No, Mrs Craig, you have a godly man for your husband—a sound and true follower; tread ye in his footsteps, and no try to set up yoursel’ on points of doctrine. But it’s time, Miss Mally, that we were taking the road; Becky and

Miss Isabella, make yourselves ready. Noo, Mrs Craig, ye'll no be a stranger; you see I have no been lang of coming to give you my countenance; but, my leddy, ca' canny, it's no easy to carry a fu' cup; ye hae gotten a great gift in your gudeman. Mr Craig, I wish you a good-night; I would fain have stopped for your evening exercise, but Miss Mally was beginning, I saw, to weary—so good-night; and, Mrs Craig, ye'll take tent or what I have said—it's for your gude."—So exeunt Mrs Glibbans, Miss Mally, and the two young ladies. "Her bark's waur than her bite," said Mrs Craig, as she returned to her husband, who felt already some of the ourie symptoms of a hen-pecked destiny.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MARRIAGE.

MR SNODGRASS was obliged to walk into Irvine one evening, to get rid of a raging tooth which had tormented him for more than a week. The operation was so delicately and cleverly performed by the surgeon to whom he applied—one of those young medical gentlemen, who, after having been educated for the army or navy, are obliged, in this weak piping time of peace, to glean what practice they can amid their native shades—that the amiable divine found himself in a condition to call on Miss Isabella Todd.

During this visit, Saunders Dickie, the postman, brought a London letter to the door for Miss Isabella; and Mr Snodgrass having desired the servant to enquire if there were any for him, had the good fortune to get the following from Mr Andrew Pringle:—

LETTER XXIX.

Andrew Pringle, Esq., to the Rev. Mr Charles Snodgrass.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I never receive a letter from you without experiencing a strong emotion of regret, that talents like yours should be wilfully consigned to the sequestered vegetation of a country pastor's life. But we have so often discussed this point, that I shall only offend your delicacy if I now revert to it more particularly. I cannot, however, but remark, that although a private station may be the happiest, a public is the proper sphere of virtue and talent, so clear, superior, and decided as yours. I say this with the more confidence, as I have really, from your letter, obtained a better conception of the queen's case, than from all that I have been able to read and hear upon the subject in London. The rule you lay down is excellent. Public safety is certainly the only principle which can justify mankind in agreeing to observe and enforce penal statutes; and, therefore, I think with you, that unless it could be proved in a very simple manner, that it was requisite for the public safety to institute proceedings against the queen—her sins or indiscretions should have been allowed to remain in the obscurity of her private circle.

I have attended the trial several times. For a judicial proceeding, it seems to me too long—and for a legislative, too technical. Brougham, it is allowed, has displayed even greater talent than was expected; but he is too sharp: he seems to me more anxious to gain a triumph, than to establish truth. I do not like the tone of his proceedings, while I cannot sufficiently admire his dexterity. The style of Denman is more lofty, and impressed with stronger lineaments of sincerity. As for their opponents, I really cannot endure the Attorney-General as an orator; his whole mind consists, as it were, of a number of little hands and claws—each of which holds some scrap or portion of his subject; but you might as well expect to get an idea of the form and character of a tree, by looking at the fallen leaves, the fruit, the seeds, and the blossoms, as any thing like a compre-

hensive view of a subject, from an intellect so constituted as that of Sir Robert Gifford. He is a man of application, but of meagre abilities, and seems never to have read a book of travels in his life. The Solicitor-General is somewhat better; but he is one of those who think a certain artificial gravity requisite to professional consequence; and which renders him somewhat obtuse in the tact of propriety.

Within the bar, the talent is superior to what it is without; and I have been often delighted with the amazing fineness, if I may use the expression, with which the chancellor discriminates the shades of difference in the various points on which he is called to deliver his opinion. I consider his mind as a curiosity of no ordinary kind. It deceives itself by its own acuteness. The edge is too sharp; and, instead of cutting straight through, it often diverges—alarming his conscience with the dread of doing wrong. This singular subtlety has the effect of impairing the reverence which the endowments and high professional accomplishments of this great man are otherwise calculated to inspire. His eloquence is not effective—it touches no feeling, nor effects any passion; but still it affords wonderful displays of a lucid intellect. I can compare it to nothing but a pencil of sunshine; in which, although one sees countless motes flickering and fluctuating, it yet illuminates, and steadily brings into the most satisfactory distinctness, every object on which it directly falls.

Lord Erskine is a character of another class, and whatever difference of opinion may exist with respect to their professional abilities and attainments, it will be allowed by those who contend that Eldon is the better lawyer—that Erskine is the greater genius. Nature herself, with a constellation in her hand, playfully illuminates his path to the temple of reasonable Justice; while Precedence with her guide-book, and Study with a lantern, cautiously show the road in which the chancellor warily plods his weary way to that of legal Equity. The sedateness of Eldon is so remarkable, that it is difficult to conceive that he was ever young; but Erskine cannot grow old: his spirit is still glowing and flushed with the enthusiasm of youth. When im-

passioned, his voice acquires a singularly elevated and pathetic accent; and I can easily conceive the irresistible effect he must have had on the minds of a jury when he was in the vigour of his physical powers, and the case required appeals of tenderness or generosity. As a parliamentary orator, Earl Grey is undoubtedly his superior; but there is something much less popular and conciliating in his manner. His eloquence is heard to most advantage when he is contemptuous; and he is then certainly dignified, ardent, and emphatic; but it is apt, I should think, to impress those who hear him for the first time, with an idea that he is a very supercilious personage, and this unfavourable impression is liable to be strengthened by the elegant aristocratic languor of his appearance.

I think that you once told me you had some knowledge of the Marquis of Lansdowne, when he was Lord Henry Petty. I can hardly hope that, after an interval of so many years, you will recognize him in the following sketch:—His appearance is much more that of a Whig than Lord Grey—stout and sturdy—but still withal gentlemanly; and there is a pleasing simplicity, with somewhat of good-nature, in the expression of his countenance, that renders him, in a quiescent state, the more agreeable character of the two. He speaks exceedingly well—clear, methodical, and argumentative; but his eloquence, like himself, is not so graceful as it is upon the whole manly; and there is a little tendency to verbosity in his language, as there is to corpulency in his figure; but nothing turgid, while it is entirely free from affectation. The character of respectable is very legibly impressed in every thing about the mind and manner of his lordship. I should, now that I have seen and heard him, be astonished to hear such a man represented as capable of being factious.

I should say something about Lord Liverpool, not only on account of his rank as a minister, but also on account of the talents which have qualified him for that high situation. The greatest objection that I have to him as a speaker, is owing to the loudness of his voice—in other respects, what he does say is well digested. But I do not think that he embraces his subject with so much power and comprehension as some of his oppo-

nents; and he has evidently less actual experience of the world. This may doubtless be attributed to his having been almost constantly in office since he came into public life; than which nothing is more detrimental to the unfolding of natural ability, while it induces a sort of artificial talent connected with forms and technicalities, which, though useful in business, is but of minor consequence in a comparative estimate of moral and intellectual qualities. I am told that in his manner he resembles Mr Pitt; be this, however, as it may, he is evidently a speaker, formed more by habit and imitation, than one whom nature prompts to be eloquent. He lacks that occasional accent of passion, the melody of oratory; and I doubt if, on any occasion, he could at all approximate to that magnificent intrepidity which was admired as one of the noblest characteristics of his master's style.

But all the display of learning and eloquence, and intellectual power and majesty of the House of Lords, shrinks into insignificance when compared with the moral attitude which the people have taken on this occasion. You know how much I have ever admired the attributes of the English national character—that boundless generosity, which can only be compared to the impartial benevolence of the sunshine—that heroic magnanimity, which makes the hand ever ready to succour a fallen foe; and that sublime courage, which rises with the energy of a conflagration roused by a tempest, at every insult or menace of an enemy. The compassionate interest taken by the populace in the future condition of the queen, is worthy of this extraordinary people. There may be many among them actuated by what is called the Radical spirit; but malignity alone would dare to ascribe the bravery of their compassion to a less noble feeling than that which has placed the kingdom so proudly in the van of all modern nations. There may be an amiable delusion, as my Lord Castlereagh has said, in the popular sentiments with respect to the queen. Upon that, as upon her case, I offer no opinion. It is enough for me to have seen, with the admiration of a worshipper, the manner in which the multitude have espoused her cause.

But my paper is filled, and I must conclude. I should, however, mention that my sister's marriage is appointed to take

place to-morrow, and that I accompany the happy pair to France.—Yours truly,

ANDREW PRINGLE.

“ This is a dry letter,” said Mr Snodgrass, and he handed it to Miss Isabella, who, in exchange, presented the one which she had herself at the same time received ; but just as Mr Snodgrass was on the point of reading it, Miss Becky Glibbans was announced. “ How lucky this is,” exclaimed Miss Becky, “ to find you both thegither ! Now, you maun tell me all the particulars ; for Miss Mally Glencairn is no in, and her letter lies unopened. I am just gasping to hear how Rachel conducted herself at being married in the kirk before all the folk. Married to the hussar captain, too, after all ! Who would have thought it ? ”

“ How, have you heard of the marriage already ? ” said Miss Isabella.—“ Oh, it’s in the newspapers ! ” replied the amiable inquisitant, “ like ony tailor or weaver’s—a’ weddings maun now-a-days gang into the papers. The whole toun, by this time, has got it ; and I woudna wonder if Rachel Pringle’s marriage ding the queen’s divorce out of folk’s heads for the next nine days to come. But only to think of her being married in a public kirk. Surely her father would never submit to hae’t done by a bishop ?—And then to put it in the London paper, as if Rachel Pringle had been somebody of distinction. Perhaps it might have been more to the purpose, considering what dragoon officers are, if she had got the doited doctor, her father, to publish the intended marriage in the papers before hand.”

“ Haud that condumacious tongue of yours,” cried a voice, panting with haste as the door opened, and Mrs Glibbans entered.—“ Becky, will you never devawl wi’ your backbiting—I wonder frae whom the misleart lassie takes a’ this passion of clashing ? ”

The authority of her parent’s tongue silenced Miss Becky, and Mrs Glibbans having seated herself, continued—“ Is it your opinion, Mr Snodgrass, that this marriage can hold good, contracted, as I am told it is mentioned in the papers to hae been, at the horns of the altar of Episcopalian apostacy ? ”

“I can set you right as to that,” said Miss Isabella. “Rachel mentions, that after returning from the church the doctor himself performed the ceremony anew, according to the Presbyterian usage.”—“I am glad to hear’t, very glad indeed,” said Mrs Glibbans. “It would have been a judgment-like thing, had a bairn of Doctor Pringle’s—than whom, although there may be abler, there is not a sounder man in a’ the west of Scotland—been sacrificed to Moloch, like the victims of prelatie idolatry.”

At this juncture, Miss Mally Glencairn was announced; she entered, holding a letter from Mrs Pringle in her hand, with the seal unbroken. Having heard of the marriage from an acquaintance in the street, she had hurried home, in the well-founded expectation of hearing from her friend and well-wisher; and taking up the letter, which she found on her table, came with all speed to Miss Isabella Todd to commune with her on the tidings.

Never was any confluence of visiters more remarkable than on this occasion. Before Miss Mally had well explained the cause of her abrupt intrusion, Mr Micklewham made his appearance: he had come to Irvine to be measured for a new coat, and meeting by accident with Saunders Dickie, got the doctor’s letter from him, which, after reading, he thought he could do no less than call at Mrs Todd’s, to let Miss Isabella know the change which had taken place in the condition of her friend.

Thus were all the correspondents of the Pringles assembled, by the merest chance, like the dramatis personæ at the end of a play. After a little harmless bantering, it was agreed that Miss Mally should read her communication first—as all the others were previously acquainted with the contents of their respective letters, and Miss Mally read as follows:—

LETTER XXX.

Mrs Pringle to Miss Mally Glencairn.

DEAR MISS MALLY,—I hava cro to pik with you consarning your comishon aboot the partickels for your friends. You can hav no noshon what the doctor and me suffert on the head of the

flooring shrubs. We took your Nota Beny as it was spilt, and went from shop to shop enquirin' in a most partiklar manner for "a Gardner's Bell, or the least of all flowering plants;" but sorrow a gardner in the whole tot here in London ever had heard of sic a thing; so we gave the porshoot up in despare. However, one of Andrew's acquaintance—a decent lad, who is only son to a saddler in a bein way, that keeps his own carriage, and his son a coryikel—happent to call, and the doctor told him what ill socsess we had in our serch for the gardner's bell; upon which he sought a sight of your yepissle, and read it as a thing that was just wonderful for its whorsogroffie; and then he sayid, that, looking at the prinsipol of your spilling, he thought we should reed "a gardner's bill, or a list of all flooring plants;" whilk being no doot your intent, I have proquert the same, and it is included heerin.—But, Miss Mally, I would advize you to be more exac in your inditing, that no sic torbolashon may hippen on a future okashon.

What I hav to say for the present is, that you will, by a smak, get a boeks of kumoddities, whilk you will destraboot as derekit on every on of them; and you will before have resievit by the post-offis, an account of what has been don. I need say no farther at this time, knowin' your discredishon and prooduns, septs that our Rachel and Captain Sabor will, if it please the Lord, be off to Parish, by way of Bryton, as man and wife, the morn's morning. What her father the doctor gives for tocher, what is settlt on her for jontor, I will tell you all aboot when we meet; for it's our dishire noo to lose no tim in retorning to the manse, this being the last of our diplomaticals in London, where we have found the Argents a most discredit family, payin' to the last farding the cornal's legacy, and most seevil, and well bred to us.

As I am naterally gretly okrypt with this matteromoneal affair, you cannot expect ony news; but the queen is going on with a dreadful rat, by which the pesents hav falen more than a whole entirr pesent. I wish our fonds were well oot of them, and in yird and stane, which is a constansie. But what is to become of the poor donsie woman, no one can expound. Some think she will be pot in the Toor of London, and her head chappit off; others think she will raise sic a stramash, that she will send the

whole government into the air, like peelings of ingons, by a gunpoother plot. But it's my opinion, and I have weighed the matter well in my understanding, that she will hav to fight with sword in hand, be she ill, or be she good. How els can she hop to get the better of more than two hundred lords, as the doctor, who has seen them, tells me, with princees of the blood-royal, and the prelatie bishops, whom, I need not tell you, are the worst of all ?

But the thing I grudge most, is to be so long in Lunden, and no to see the king. Is it not a hard thing to come to London, and no to see the king ? I am not pleased with him, I assure you, becose he does not set himself out to public view, like ony other curiosity, but stays in his palis, they say, like one of the anshent wooden images of idolatry, the which is a great peety, he beeing, as I am told, a beautiful man, and more the gentleman than all the coortiers of his court.

The doctor has been minting to me that there is an address from Irvine to the queen ; and he, being so near a neighbour to your toun, has been thinking to pay his respects with it, to see her near at hand. But I will say nothing : he may take his own way in matters of gospel and spiritualety ; yet I have my scroopols of consence, how this may not turn out a rebellyon against the king ; and I would hav him to sift and see who are at the address, before he pits his han' to it. For, if it's a radikol job, as I jealoos it is, what will the doctor then say ? who is an orthodox man, as the world nose.

In the maitre of our durnesticks, no new axsident has cast up ; but I have seen such a wonder as could not have been forethocht. Having a washin', I went down to see how the lassies were doing ; but judge of my feelings, when I saw them triomphing on the top of pattons, standing upright before the boyns on chairs, rubbin' the clothes to juggins between their hands, above the sapples, with their gouns and stays on, and round-eared mutches. What would you think of such a miracle at the washing-house in the Goffields, or the Gallowsknows of Irvine ? The cook, howsomever, has shown me a way to make rice-puddings without eggs, by putting in a bit of shoohet, which is as good—and this you will tell Miss Nanny Eydent ; likewise, that the most

fashionable way of boiling green pis, is to pit a blade of speer-mint in the pot, which gives a fine flavour.—But this is a long letter, and my pepper is done ; so no more, but remains your friend and well-wisher,

JANET PRINGLE.

“ A great legacy and her dochtir married, in ae journey to London, is doing business,” said Mrs Glibbans with a sigh, as she looked to her only get, Miss Becky ; “ but the Lord’s will is to be done in a thing. Sooner or later, something of the same kind will come, I trust, to all our families.”—“ Ay,” replied Miss Mally Glencairn, “ marriage is like death—it’s what we are a’ to come to.”

“ I have my doubts of that,” said Miss Becky, with a sneer—“ Ye have been lang spair’t from it, Miss Mally.”

“ Ye’re a spiteful puddock ; and if the men hae the een and lugs they used to hae, gude pity him whose lot is cast with thine, Becky Glibbans,” replied the elderly maiden ornament of the Kirkgate, somewhat tartly.

Here Mr Snodgrass interposed, and said, he would read to them the letter which Miss Isabella had received from the bride ; and without waiting for their concurrence, opened and read as follows :—

LETTER XXXI.

Mrs Sabre to Miss Isabella Todd.

MY DEAREST BELL,—Rachel Pringle is no more ! My heart flutters as I write the fatal words. This morning, at nine o’clock precisely, she was conducted in bridal array to the new church of Mary-le-bone ; and there, with ring and book, sacrificed to the minotaur, Matrimony, who devours so many of our bravest youths and fairest maidens.

My mind is too agitated to allow me to describe the scene. The office of handmaid to the victim, which, in our young simplicity, we had fondly thought one of us would perform for the other, was gracefully sustained by Miss Argent.

On returning from church to my father's residence in Baker Street, where we breakfasted, he declared himself not satisfied with the formalities of the English ritual, and obliged us to undergo a second ceremony from himself, according to the wonted forms of the Scottish Church. All the advantages and pleasures of which, my dear Bell, I hope you will soon enjoy.

But I have no time to enter into particulars. The captain and his lady, by themselves, in their own carriage, set off for Brighton in the course of less than an hour. On Friday they are to be followed by a large party of their friends and relations; and, after spending a few days in that emporium of salt-water pleasures, they embark, accompanied with their beloved brother, Mr Andrew Pringle, for Paris; where they are afterwards to be joined by the Argents. It is our intention to remain about a month in the French capital; whether we shall extend our tour, will depend on subsequent circumstances; in the mean time, however, you will hear frequently from me.

My mother, who has a thousand times during these important transactions wished for the assistance of Nanny Eydent, transmits to Miss Mally Glencairn a box containing all the requisite bridal recognizances for our Irvine friends. I need not say that the best is for the faithful companion of my happiest years. As I had made a vow in my heart that Becky Glibbans should never wear gloves for my marriage, I was averse to sending her any at all, but my mother insisted that no exceptions should be made. I secretly took care, however, to mark a pair for her, so much too large that I am sure she will never put them on. The asp will be not a little vexed at the disappointment. Adieu for a time, and believe that, although your affectionate Rachel Pringle be gone that way in which she hopes you will soon follow, one not less sincerely attached to you, though it be the first time she has so subscribed herself, remains in

RACHEL SABRE.

Before the ladies had time to say a word on the subject, the prudent young clergyman called immediately on Mr Micklewham to read the letter which he had received from the doctor and which the worthy dominie did without delay, in that rich

and full voice with which he is accustomed to teach his scholars elocution by example.

LETTER XXXII.

*The Rev. Z. Pringle, D. D., to Mr Micklewham, Schoolmaster
and Session-clerk, Garnock.*

London.

DEAR SIR,—I have been much longer of replying to your letter of the 3d of last month, than I ought in civility to have been; but really time, in this town of London, runs at a fast rate, and the day passes before the dark's done. What with Mrs Pringle and her daughter's concernments, anent the marriage to Captain Sabre, and the trouble I felt myself obliged to take in the queen's affair, I assure you, Mr Micklewham, that it's no to be expressed how I have been occupied for the last four weeks. But all things must come to a conclusion in this world. Rachel Pringle is married, and the queen's weary trial is brought to an end—upon the subject and motion of the same, I offer no opinion, for I made it a point never to read the evidence, being resolved to stand by THE WORD from the first, which is clearly and plainly written in the queen's favour, and it does not do in a case of conscience to stand on trifles: putting, therefore, out of consideration the fact libelled, and looking both at the head and the tail of the proceeding, I was of a firm persuasion, that all the sculduddery of the business might have been well spared from the eye of the public, which is of itself sufficiently prone to keek and kook, in every possible way, for a glimpse of a black story; and, therefore, I thought it my duty to stand up in all places against the trafficking that was attempted with a divine institution. And I think, when my people read how their prelate enemies, the bishops (the heavens defend the poor Church of Scotland from being subjected to the weight of their paws!) have been visited with a constipation of the understanding on that point, it must to them be a great satisfaction to know how clear and collected their minister was on this fundamental of society. For it has turned out, as I said to Mrs Pringle as well as others

it would do, that a sense of grace and religion would be manifested in some quarter before all was done, by which the devices for an unsanctified repudiation or divorce would be set at nought.

As often as I could, deeming it my duty as a minister of the word and gospel, I got into the House of Lords, and heard the trial; and I cannot think how ever it was expected that justice could be done yonder: for although no man could be more attentive than I was, every time I came away I was more confounded than when I went; and when the trial was done, it seemed to me just to be clearing up for a proper beginning—all which is a proof that there was a foul conspiracy. Indeed, when I saw Duke Hamilton's daughter coming out of the coach with the queen, I never could think after, that a lady of her degree would have countenanced the queen had the matter laid to her charge been as it was said. Not but in any circumstance it behoved a lady of that ancient and royal blood, to be seen beside the queen in such a great historical case as a trial.

I hope, in the part I have taken, my people will be satisfied; but whether they are satisfied or not, my own conscience is content with me. I was in the House of Lords when her majesty came down for the last time, and saw her handed up the stairs by the usher of the black rod, a little stumpy man, wonderful particular about the rules of the House, insomuch that he was almost angry with me for stopping at the stair-head. The afflicted woman was then in great spirits; and I saw no symptoms of the swelled legs that Lord Lauderdale, that jooking man, spoke about, for she skippit up the steps like a lassie. But my heart was wae for her when all was over, for she came out like an astonished creature, with a wild steadfast look, and a sort of something in the face that was as if the rational spirit had fled away; and she went down to her coach as if she had submitted to be led to a doleful destiny. Then the shouting of the people began, and I saw and shouted too in spite of my decorum, which I marvel at sometimes, thinking it could be nothing less than an involuntary testification of the spirit within me.

Anent the marriage of Rachel Pringle, it may be needful in

me to state, for the satisfaction of my people, that although by stress of law we were obligated to conform to the practice of the Episcopalians, by taking out a bishop's license, and going to their church, and vowing, in a pagan fashion, before their altars, which are an abomination to the Lord; yet, when the young folk came home, I made them stand up and be married again before me, according to all regular marriages in our national church. For this I had two reasons; first, to satisfy myself that there had been a true and real marriage; and, secondly, to remove the doubt of the former ceremony being sufficient; for marriage being of divine appointment, and the English form and ritual being a thing established by Act of Parliament, which is of human ordination, I was not sure that marriage performed according to a human enactment could be a fulfilment of a divine ordinance. I therefore hope that my people will approve what I have done; and in order that there may be a sympathizing with me, you will go over to Banker M——y, and get what he will give you, as ordered by me, and distribute it among the poorest of the parish, according to the best of your discretion, my long absence having taken from me the power of judgment in a matter of this sort. I wish indeed for the glad sympathy of my people; for I think that our Saviour turning water into wine at the wedding, was an example set that we should rejoice and be merry at the fulfilment of one of the great obligations imposed on us as social creatures; and I have ever regarded the unhonoured treatment of a marriage occasion as a thing of evil bodement, betokening heavy hearts and light purses to the lot of the bride and bridegroom. You will hear more from me by and by; in the mean time, all I can say is, that when we have taken our leave of the young folks, who are going to France, it is Mrs Pringle's intent, as well as mine, to turn our horses' heads northward, and make our way with what speed we can, for our own quiet home, among you.—So no more at present from your friend and pastor,

Z. PRINGLE.

Mrs Todd, the mother of Miss Isabella, a respectable widow lady, who had quiescently joined the company, proposed that

they should now drink health, happiness, and all manner of prosperity, to the young couple; and that nothing might be wanting to secure the favourable auspices of good omens to the toast, she desired Miss Isabella to draw fresh bottles of white and red. When all manner of felicity was duly wished in wine to the captain and his lady, the party rose to seek their respective homes. But a bustle at the street-door occasioned a pause. Mrs Todd enquired the matter; and three or four voices at once replied, that an express had come from Garnock for Nanse Swaddle the midwife, Mrs Craig being taken with her pains. "Mr Snodgrass," said Mrs Glibbans, instantly and emphatically, "ye maun let me go with you, and we can spiritualize on the road; for I hae promis't Mrs Craig to be wi' her at the crying, to see the upshot—so I hope you will come awa."

It would be impossible in us to suppose, that Mr Snodgrass had any objections to spiritualize with Mrs Glibbans on the road between Irvine and Garnock; but, notwithstanding her urgency, he excused himself from going with her: however, he recommended her to the special care and protection of Mr Micklewham, who was at that time on his legs to return home. "Oh! Mr Snodgrass," said the lady, looking slyly, as she adjusted her cloak, at him and Miss Isabella, "there will be marrying and giving in marriage till the day of judgment." And with these oracular words she took her departure.

CHAPTER X.

THE RETURN.

ON Friday, Miss Mally Glencairn received a brief note from Mrs Pringle, informing her that she and the doctor would reach the manse, "God willing," in time for tea on Saturday; and begging her, therefore, to go over from Irvine, and see that the house was in order for their reception. This note was written

from Glasgow, where they had arrived, in their own carriage, from Carlisle on the preceding day, after encountering, as Mrs Pringle said, "more hardships and extorshoning than all the dangers of the sea which they met with in the smack of Leith that took them to London."

As soon as Miss Mally received this intelligence, she went to Miss Isabella Todd, and requested her company for the next day to Garnock, where they arrived betimes to dine with Mr Snodgrass. Mrs Glibbans and her daughter Becky were then on a consolatory visit to Mr Craig. We mentioned in the last chapter, that the crying of Mrs Craig had come on; and that Mrs Glibbans, according to promise, and with the most anxious solicitude, had gone to wait the upshot. The upshot was most melancholy—Mrs Craig was soon no more;—she was taken, as Mrs Glibbans observed on the occasion, from the earthly arms of her husband, to the spiritual bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which was far better. But the baby survived; so that, what with getting a nurse, and the burial, and all the work and handling that a birth and death in one house at the same time causes, Mr Craig declared that he could not do without Mrs Glibbans; and she, with all that Christianity by which she was so zealously distinguished, sent for Miss Becky, and took up her abode with him, till it would please Him, without whom there is no comfort, to wipe the eyes of the pious elder. In a word, she stayed so long, that a rumour began to spread that Mr Craig would need a wife to look after his bairn; and that Mrs Glibbans was destined to supply the desideratum.

Mr Snodgrass, after enjoying his dinner society with Miss Mally and Miss Isabella, thought it necessary to dispatch a courier, in the shape of a barefooted servant lass, to Mr Micklewham, to inform the elders that the doctor was expected home in time for tea, leaving it to their discretion either to greet his safe return at the manse, or in any other form or manner that would be most agreeable to themselves. These important news were soon diffused through the clachan. Mr Micklewham dismissed his school an hour before the wonted time, and there was a universal interest and curiosity excited, to see the doctor

coming home in his own coach. All the boys of Garnock assembled at the Braehead, which commands an extensive view of the Kilmarnock road, the only one from Glasgow that runs through the parish; the wives with their sucklings were seated on the large stones at their respective door-cheeks; while their cats were calmly reclining on the window soles. The lassie weans, like clustering bees, were mounted on the carts that stood before Thomas Birlpenny the vintner's door, churming with anticipated delight; the old men took their stations on the dike that incloses the side of the vintner's kail-yard; and "a batch of wabster lads," with green aprons and thin yellow faces, planted themselves at the gable of the malt-kiln, where they were wont, when trade was better, to play at the hand-ball; but, poor fellows! since the trade fell off, they have had no heart for the game, and the vintner's half-mutchkin stoups glitter in empty splendour unrequired, on the shelf below the brazen sconce above the bracepiece, amidst the idle pewter pepper-boxes, the bright copper tea-kettle, the coffee-pot that has never been in use, and lids of sauce-pans that have survived their principals—the wonted ornaments of every trig change-house kitchen.

The season was far advanced; but the sun shone at his setting with a glorious composure, and the birds in the hedges and on the boughs were again gladdened into song. The leaves had fallen thickly, and the stubble-fields were bare; but Autumn, in a many-coloured tartan plaid, was seen still walking with matronly composure in the woodlands, along the brow of the neighbouring hills.

About half-past four o'clock, a movement was seen among the callans at the Braehead, and a shout announced that a carriage was in sight. It was answered by a murmuring response of satisfaction from the whole village. In the course of a few minutes the carriage reached the turnpike—it was of the darkest green and the gravest fashion,—a large trunk, covered with Russian matting, and fastened on with cords, prevented from chafing it by knots of straw rope, occupied the front,—behind, other two were fixed in the same manner, the lesser of course uppermost; and deep beyond a pile of light bundles and band-

boxes, that occupied a large portion of the interior, the blithe faces of the doctor and Mrs Pringle were discovered. The boys huzzaed, the doctor flung them penny-pieces, and the mistress bawbees.

As the carriage drove along, the old men on the dike stood up and reverently took off their hats and bonnets. The weaver lads gazed with a melancholy smile; the lassies on the carts clapped their hands with joy; the women on both sides of the street acknowledged the recognizing nods; while all the village dogs, surprised by the sound of chariot wheels, came baying and barking forth, and sent off the cats that were so doucely sitting on the window soles, clambering and scampering over the roofs in terror of their lives.

When the carriage reached the manse door, Mr Snodgrass, the two ladies, with Mr Micklewham, and all the elders except Mr Craig, were there ready to receive the travellers. But over this joy of welcoming we must draw a veil; for the first thing that the doctor did on entering the parlour, and before sitting down, was to return thanks for his safe restoration to his home and people.

The carriage was then unloaded; and as package, bale, box, and bundle were successively brought in, Miss Mally Glencairn expressed her admiration at the great capacity of the chaise.—“Ay,” said Mrs Pringle, “but you know not what we have suffert for’t in coming through among the English taverns on the road. Some of them would not take us forward when there was a hill to pass, unless we would take four horses; and every one after another reviled us for having no mercy in loading the carriage like a waggon—and then the drivers were so gleg and impudent, that it was worse than martyrdom to come with them. Had the doctor taken my advice, he would have brought our own civil London coachman, whom we hired with his own horses by the job; but he said it behoved us to gie our ain fish-guts to our ain sea-maws, and that he designed to fee Thomas Birlpenny’s hostler for our coachman, being a lad of the parish. This obliged us to post it from London; but oh, Miss Mally, what an outlay it has been!”

The doctor, in the mean time, had entered into conversation with the gentlemen, and was enquiring, in the most particular manner, respecting all his parishioners, and expressing his surprise that Mr Craig had not been at the manse with the rest of the elders. "It does not look well," said the doctor. Mr Daff, however, offered the best apology for his absence that could be made. "He has had a gentle dispensation, sir—Mrs Craig has won awa' out of this sinful world, poor woman. She had a large experience o't; but the bairn's to the fore; and Mrs Glibbans, that has such a cast of grace, has ta'en charge of the house since before the interment. It's thought, considering what's bygane, Mr Craig may do waur than make her mistress; and I hope, sir, your exhortation will no be wanting to egg the honest man to think o't seriously."

Mr Snodgrass, before delivering the household keys, ordered two bottles of wine, with glasses and biscuit, to be set upon the table, while Mrs Pringle produced from a paper package, that had helped to stuff one of the pockets of the carriage, a piece of rich plum-cake, brought all the way from a confectioner's in Cockspur Street, London, not only for the purpose of being eaten, but, as she said, to let Miss Nanny Eydent pree, in order to direct the Irvine bakers how to bake others like it.

Tea was then brought in; and as it was making, the doctor talked aside to the elders, while Mrs Pringle recounted to Miss Mally and Miss Isabella the different incidents of her adventures subsequent to the marriage of Miss Rachel.

"The young folk," said she, "having gone to Brighton, we followed them in a few days, for we were told it was a curiosity, and that the king has a palace there, just a world's wonder! and truly, Miss Mally, it is certainly not like a house for a creature of this world, but for some Grand Turk or China man. The doctor said, it put him in mind of Miss Jenny Macbride's side-board in the Stockwell of Glasgow; where all the pepper-boxes, poories, and tea-pots, punch-bowls, and china-candlesticks of her progenitors are set out for a show, that tells her visitors they are but seldom put to use. As for the town of Brighton, it's what I would call a gawky piece of London. I could see

nothing in it but a wheen idlers, hearing twa lads, at night, crying, 'Five, six, seven for a shilling,' in the booksellers' shops, with a playactor lady singing in a corner, because her voice would not do for the players' stage. Therefore, having seen the Captain and Mrs Sabre off to France, we came home to London; but it's not to be told what we had to pay at the hotel where we stayed in Brighton. Howsomever, having come back to London, we settled our 'counts, and, buying a few necessais, we prepared for Scotland—and here we are. But travelling has surely a fine effect in enlarging the understanding; for both the doctor and me thought, as we came along, that every thing had a smaller and poorer look than when we went away; and I dinna think this room is just what it used to be. What think ye o't, Miss Isabella? How would ye like to spend your days in't?"

Miss Isabella reddened at this question; but Mrs Pringle, who was as prudent as she was observant, affecting not to notice this, turned round to Miss Mally Glencairn, and said softly in her ear,—“Rachel was Bell's confidante, and has told us all about what's going on between her and Mr Snodgrass. We have agreed no to stand in their way, as soon as the doctor can get a mailing or tyo to secure his money upon.”

Meantime, the doctor received from the elders a very satisfactory account of all that had happened among his people, both in and out of the session, during his absence; and he was vastly pleased to find there had been no inordinate increase of wickedness: at the same time, he was grieved for the condition in which the poor weavers still continued, saying, that among other things of which he had been of late meditating, was the setting up of a lending bank in the parish for the labouring classes, where, when they were out of work, “bits of loans for a house-rent, or a brat of claes, or sic like, might be granted, to be repaid when trade grew better, and thereby take away the objection that an honest pride had to receiving help from the session.”

Then some lighter general conversation ensued, in which the doctor gave his worthy counsellors a very jocose description of many of the lesser sort of adventures which he had met with;

and the ladies having retired to inspect the great bargains that Mrs Pringle had got, and the splendid additions she had made to her wardrobe, out of what she denominated the dividends of the present portion of the legacy, the doctor ordered in the second biggest toddy-bowl, the guardevine with the old rum, and told the lassie to see if the tea-kettle was still boiling.

“Ye maun drink our welcome hame,” said he to the elders; “it would nae otherwise be canny. But I’m sorry Mr Craig has nae come.” At these words the door opened, and the absent elder entered, with a long face and a deep sigh. “Ha!” cried Mr Daff, “this is very droll. Speak of the Evil One, and he’ll appear;”—which words dented on the heart of Mr Craig, who thought his marriage in December had been the subject of their discourse.—The doctor, however, went up and shook him cordially by the hand, and said, ‘Now I take this very kind, Mr Craig; for I could not have expected you, considering ye have got, as I am told, your jo in the house;’ at which words the doctor winked pawkily to Mr Daff, who rubbed his hands with fainness, and gave a good-humoured sort of keckling laugh. This facetious stroke of policy was a great relief to the afflicted elder, for he saw by it that the doctor did not mean to trouble him with any enquiries respecting his deceased wife; and, in consequence, he put on a blither face, and really affected to have forgotten her already more than he had done in sincerity.

Thus the night passed in decent temperance and a happy decorum; insomuch, that the elders, when they went away, either by the influence of the toddy-bowl, or the doctor’s funny stories about the Englishers, declared that he was an excellent man, and, being none lifted up, was worthy of his rich legacy.

At supper, the party, besides the minister and Mrs Pringle, consisted of the two Irvine ladies, and Mr Snodgrass. Miss Beckey Glibbans came in when it was about half over, to express her mother’s sorrow at not being able to call that night, “Mr Craig’s bairn having taken an ill turn.” The truth, however, was, that the worthy elder had been rendered somewhat tozy by the minister’s toddy, and wanted an opportunity to inform the old lady of the joke that had been played upon him by the

doctor calling her his jo, and to see how she would relish it. So by a little address Miss Becky was sent out of the way, with the excuse we have noticed; at the same time, as the night was rather sharp, it is not to be supposed that she would have been the bearer of any such message, had her own curiosity not enticed her.

During supper the conversation was very lively. Many "pickant jokes," as Miss Becky described them, were cracked by the doctor; but, soon after the table was cleared, he touched Mr Snodgrass on the arm, and, taking up one of the candles, went with him to his study, where he then told him that Rachel Pringle, now Mrs Sabre, had informed him of a way in which he could do him a service.—"I understand, sir," said the doctor, "that you have a notion of Miss Bell Todd, but that until ye get a kirk there can be no marriage. But the auld horse may die waiting for the new grass; and, therefore, as the Lord has put it in my power to do a good action both to you and my people—whom I am glad to hear you have pleased so well—if it can be brought about that you could be made helper and successor, I'll no object to give up to you the whole stipend, and, by and by, maybe the manse to the bargain. But that is if you marry Miss Bell: for it was a promise that Rachel gar't me make to her on her wedding morning. Ye know she was a forecasting lassie, and, I have reason to believe, has said nothing anent this to Miss Bell herself; so that if you have no partiality for Miss Bell, things will just rest on their own footing; but if you have a notion, it must be a satisfaction to you to know this, as it will be a pleasure to me to carry it as soon as possible into effect."

Mr Snodgrass was a good deal agitated; he was taken by surprise, and without words the doctor might have guessed his sentiments: he, however, frankly confessed that he did entertain a very high opinion of Miss Bell, but that he was not sure if a country parish would exactly suit him. "Never mind that," said the doctor; "if it does not fit at first, you will get used to it; and if a better casts up, it will be no obstacle."

The two gentlemen then rejoined the ladies, and, after a short

conversation, Miss Becky Glibbans was admonished to depart, by the servants bringing in the Bibles for the worship of the evening. This was usually performed before supper, but, owing to the bowl being on the table, and the company jocose, it had been postponed till all the guests who were not to sleep in the house had departed.

The Sunday morning was fine and bright for the season; the hoar-frost, till about an hour after sunrise, lay white on the grass and tombstones in the churchyard; but before the bell rung for the congregation to assemble, it was exhaled away, and a freshness, that was only known to be autumnal by the fallen and yellow leaves that strewed the church-way path from the ash and plane-trees in the avenue, encouraged the spirits to sympathize with the universal cheerfulness of all nature.

The return of the doctor had been bruited through the parish with so much expedition, that, when the bell rung for public worship, none of those who were in the practice of stopping in the churchyard to talk about the weather, were so ignorant as not to have heard of this important fact. In consequence, before the time at which the doctor was wont to come from the back-gate which opened from the manse-garden into the churchyard, a great majority of his people were assembled to receive him.

At the last jingle of the bell, the back-gate was usually opened, and the doctor was wont to come forth as punctually as a cuckoo of a clock at the striking of the hour; but a deviation was observed on this occasion. Formerly, Mrs Pringle and the rest of the family came first, and a few minutes were allowed to elapse before the doctor, laden with grace, made his appearance. But at this time, either because it had been settled that Mr Snodgrass was to officiate, or for some other reason, there was a breach in the observance of this time-honoured custom.

As the ringing of the bell ceased, the gate unclosed, and the doctor came forth. He was of that easy sort of feather-bed corpulency of form that betokens good-nature, and had none of that smooth, red, well-filled protuberancy, which indicates a choleric

humour and a testy temper. He was in fact what Mrs Glibbans denominated, "a man of a gawsy external." And some little change had taken place during his absence in his visible equipage. His stockings, which were wont to be of worsted, had undergone a translation into silk; his waistcoat, instead of the venerable Presbyterian flap-covers to the pockets, which were of Johnsonian magnitude, was become plain; his coat, in all times single-breasted, with no collar, still, however, maintained its ancient characteristics—instead, however, of the former bright black cast-horn, the buttons were covered with cloth. But the chief alteration was discernible in the furniture of the head. He had exchanged the simplicity of his own respectable grey hairs for the cauliflower hoariness of a PARRISH* wig, on which he wore a broad-brimmed hat, turned up a little at each side behind, in a portentous manner, indicatory of Episcopalian predilections. This, however, was not justified by any alteration in his principles, being merely an innocent variation of fashion, the natural result of a doctor of divinity buying a hat and wig in London.

The moment that the doctor made his appearance, his greeting and salutation was quite delightful; it was that of a father returned to his children, and a king to his people.

Almost immediately after the doctor, Mrs Pringle, followed by Miss Mally Glencairn and Miss Isabella Todd, also debouched from the gate; and the assembled females remarked, with no less instinct, the transmutation which she had undergone. She was dressed in a dark blue cloth pelisse, trimmed with a dyed fur which, as she told Miss Mally, "looked quite as well as sable, without costing a third of the money." A most matronly muff, that, without being of sable, was of an excellent quality, contained her hands; and a very large Leghorn straw bonnet, decorated richly, but far from excess, with a most substantial band and bow of a broad crimson satin riband around her head.

If the doctor was gratified to see his people so gladly thronging around him, Mrs Pringle had no less pleasure also in her thrice-welcome reception. It was an understood thing, that she

* See the Edinburgh Review, for an account of our old friend Dr Parr's wig, and Spital Sermon.

had been mainly instrumental in enabling the minister to get his great Indian legacy; and, in whatever estimation she may have been previously held for her economy and management, she was now looked up to as a personage skilled in the law, and particularly versed in testamentary erudition. Accordingly, in the customary testimonials of homage with which she was saluted in her passage to the church door, there was evidently a sentiment of veneration mingled, such as had never been evinced before, and which was neither unobserved nor unappreciated by that acute and perspicacious lady.

The doctor himself did not preach, but sat in the minister's pew till Mr Snodgrass had concluded an eloquent and truly an affecting sermon; at the end of which, the doctor rose and went up into the pulpit, where he publicly returned thanks for the favours and blessings he had obtained during his absence, and for the safety in which he had been restored, after many dangers and tribulations, to the affections of his parishioners.

Such were the principal circumstances that marked the return of the family. In the course of the week after, the estate of Moneypennies being for sale, it was bought for the doctor as a great bargain. It was not, however, on account of the advantageous nature of the purchase that our friend valued this acquisition, but entirely because it was situated in his own parish, and part of the lands marching with the glebe.

The previous owner of Moneypennies had built an elegant house on the estate, to which Mrs Pringle is at present actively preparing to remove from the manse; and it is understood, that, as Mr Snodgrass was last week declared helper and successor to the doctor, his marriage with Miss Isabella Todd will take place with all convenient expedition. There is also reason to believe, that, as soon as decorum will permit, any scruple which Mrs Glibbans had to a second marriage is now removed, and that she will soon again grace the happy circle of wives by the name of Mrs Craig. Indeed, we are assured that Miss Nanny Eydent is actually at this time employed in making up her wedding garments; for, last week, that worthy and respectable young person was known to have visited Bailie Delap's shop, at a very early hour in the morning, and to have priced many things of

a bridal character, besides getting swatches; after which she was seen to go to Mrs Glibbans's house, where she remained a very considerable time, and to return straight therefrom to the shop, and purchase divers of the articles which she had priced and inspected; all of which constitute sufficient grounds for the general opinion in Irvine, that the union of Mr Craig with Mrs Glibbans is a happy event drawing near to consummation.

END OF THE AYRSHIRE LEGATEES.

ILLUSTRATIONS, ANECDOTES,

AND

CRITICAL REMARKS.

ILLUSTRATIONS, &c.

It has been deemed advisable to append, to this republication of Mr Galt's most popular writings, such anecdotes as could be found referring to the history of each particular tale, or as identifying the originals of some of the characters and localities described. To these has been added a selection from the critical opinions expressed regarding these narratives, shortly after the era of publication.

It will be seen that the former of these have been principally gleaned from memoranda furnished by the author himself in subsequent works; the latter from the leading Reviews and Magazines.

The following preliminary general observations are not inapplicable to our present purpose. They are from the *Literary Life*, vol. i. pp. 144-7.

“Before I proceed to notice separately those productions which have obtained the greatest share of attention, and in which it is supposed my ‘great strength lieth,’ it is necessary I should enter into some explanation relative to ‘mine art.’

“It is imagined that I have drawn entirely on my recollection, both for the incidents and characters of my most valuable pictures; and it has been alleged that I have had very little recourse to that kind of invention, composition, which constitutes the vitality of art; and that, in consequence of not having had access to the company of proper models, I have failed in my attempts to exhibit persons of a higher sphere of life than my own.

“Those who first gave forth these imaginations, could have known little of my history, even while they were paying the very highest compliment to the accuracy of my observations.

“It may be seen by my Autobiography that I was brought up in a respectable station, which rendered me very unlikely to have

after I was ten years old, seen much of that life which it is supposed I have most delighted to paint. But a certain distance in all limning is necessary to enable an artist to contemplate, in the most picturesque point of view, the objects he would represent. The *vraisemblable* of my pictures ought to have been, therefore, regarded as a proof that I could not have been very intimately near those things which I have chosen to depict; although in all of them there may be a bringing together of homogeneous circumstances, so obvious, that the mere mirroring of the mind is not their sole merit, and for this reason:—there is a universal harmony in nature; and in the imitation and perception of this divine impress consist the excellence and the glory of art. One may extract by observation the elements, as it were, of works of art; but the discernment of the eternal and universal harmony is essential to their formation; and the exactness with which it is imitated by composition, constitutes that approximation to perfection which genius hopes to attain.

“ This accuracy in individual impressions on the mind, which is common memory, and which all men in some degree possess, is not only requisite in art, but also a faculty to perceive the all-pervading harmony of nature; or, in other words, the power of discerning the things which can fittest be assimilated. Occasionally I have flattered myself that I possessed a little portion of this innate endowment, especially since some of my attempts to put things together, in accordance with the systematic harmony of nature, have been generally recognised as not to have been failures; and I acknowledge that I have often much pleasure in forming groups of the recollections of the individual things which I have previously noticed, but I am not myself conscious of having laid my recollection under any other contribution. I have but done as the painters do—made compositions by dovetailing different sketches together. Moreover, the models to which I have had recourse, were not always of that rank of life in which I have represented them. Leddy Grippy, for example, is the caricature of a person in a very different station from that to which she is represented as belonging. I only, however, took the outline. And Sir Andrew Wylie had his original in a late very worthy, straight-forward baronet—with, however, a little dash of more drollery than I ever saw in my model. Moreover, I never slept but one night in a manse, and

that was then the habitation of a clergyman, any thing but a Mr Balwhidder.

“It was to the natural character that my studies were directed; and I need not add that this is more obvious in the upper orders than in the middle classes. I confess, indeed, that I have been but little susceptible for a long time of the difference of that drapery in which so many think all the differences of rank consist; for I have looked more at God’s creatures than at the works of the tailor or milliner. * * * *

“The only question is—Are my descriptions natural? are my characters, no matter whether crones, carls, or courtiers, like human beings?”

“ANNALS OF THE PARISH.”

“After my return from Gibraltar, the work subsequently published under the title of the Annals of the Parish, was my first production. It was undertaken in the summer of 1813. When very young, I wished to write a book that would be for Scotland what the Vicar of Wakefield is for England, and early began to observe and to conjecture in what respects the minister of a rural parish differed from the general inhabitants of the country. The study was not, however, pursued with any particular intensity, the opportunity being wanting; for our town was large, and the clergymen in it too urbane to furnish a model. The *beau-ideal* of a rural pastor never presented itself to me; but I heard from others descriptions of the characters of individuals, by which I was furnished with many hints. The original of Micah Balwhidder was minister of Saltcoats in my youth; I never saw him, though from boyhood intimate with members of his family.

“One Sunday, happening to take a walk to the neighbouring village to Greenock, Innerkip, I observed that, from the time I had been there, some progress had been made by Sir John Shaw Stewart in turning it inside out. While looking at the various improvements around, my intention of writing a minister’s sedate adventures returned upon me, as if the mantle of inspiration had suddenly dropped upon my shoulders, and I resolved to make the schoolmaster of the village the recorder of a register. A speci-

men of what I then designed is introduced into Eben Erskine; but I did not proceed with that intention, and it was not till after my marriage that I altered my plan into the *Annals of the Parish*; nor did I then quite complete it, as I was informed that Scottish novels would not succeed, (*Waverley* was not then published;) and in consequence I threw the manuscript aside.

"Years after, I found it among my papers, and read it over as an entire stranger, when several passages struck me as having some merit; and as they produced the same effect on my friend Mr O——, who that day dined with me, I sent the manuscript to Mr Blackwood of Edinburgh, by whom it was published.

"Some of the individuals who have been the models of the characters, were, on the publication, at once recognised, which tended to corroborate the favourable opinion I had myself formed of the work; but although the story was suggested by the improvements of Innerkip, the scene is laid in the whereabouts of the village of Dreghorn.

"I have been told, when the book first came out, Lady M—— recognised her aunt Lady B—— C—— in Lady Macadam. There was some shrewdness in the guess; for although of the eccentricities of the old lady I have but a schoolboy's recollection, she certainly was present to my imagination in the conception of the character, arising from local circumstances connected with Dreghorn. The actual model was a Mrs P——, of St Peter's, Isle of Thanet, where, I dare say, she is still remembered. Since the book was finished, I have become acquainted, however, with a still more perfect specimen of the same genus, in a young lady who is in her eighty-ninth year, and might become immortal if she would only write her own reminiscences.

"I am led from many circumstances to conclude that this simple work is considered the best of my productions; but although willing to regard it among the most original, I do not myself think so. No doubt it has, what my own taste values highly, considerable likeness, if the expression may be used; but it is so void of any thing like a plot, that it lacks in the most material feature of the novel.

"To myself it has ever been a kind of treatise on the history of society in the west of Scotland during the reign of King George the Third; and when it was written, I had no idea it would ever

have been received as a novel. Fables are often a better way of illustrating philosophical truths than abstract reasoning; and in this class of compositions I would place the Annals of the Parish; but the public consider it as a novel, and it is of no use to think of altering the impression with which it has been received.

“In some respects I may be justified in being proud of the Annals of the Parish, as it has been the means of procuring me many civilities and some amusement.

“But the conception of the work is now an old story, and I have had, since it was written, something else to do than to think much about it. Indeed, it is full ten years since I looked into it; nor was I aware, till I did so to-day to brighten the materials of this chapter, that it affords so many exact specimens of the kind of art which I have indifferently studied. In turning over the leaves, I see, in almost every page, proofs of those kind of materials to which I have been most addicted—things of which the originals are, or were, actually in nature, but brought together into composition by art. I will give some of them, that the reader may see why I deny to memory that honour which is so freely granted, while I admit that my portfolio possessed scarcely more than her sketches.

“In the very second page of the First Chapter, the account of ‘the placing’ of Mr Balwhidder is derived from a description, which I perfectly recollect, of some similar ceremony that my grandmother had witnessed. At a placing which happened in Greenock, I heard myself a weaver, of the name, I think, of Johnny Finnie, pronounce the very words I have ascribed to Thomas Thorl. This man was the son of the West Kirk betheral, whom I have done my best to immortalize in the story of a similar worthy. The account of ‘laying the hands’ was a joke ascribed to Mr Thom, the minister of Govan, at the placing a neighbouring minister. The interview with Thomas Thorl is founded on an account given by my grandmother of a reception she gave herself, in days of yore, to one of ‘God’s gorbies,’ at Irvine. The whole story of Mrs Malcolm and her family is an invention, though I am inclined to think it is indebted to some hints of the same ingenious carlin; for her maiden name was Malcolm, nor am I sure that the memory had any thing to do with the remainder of the chapter.

“The Second Chapter owes much to my recollection of hearing

of the smuggling days at the Troon, in Ayrshire, the same place where the Duke of Portland, since my schoolboy time, has built a town. The story of the Chelsea pensioner is an invention; but the surreptitious tea-drinking in the garden is beholden to the 'venerable parent.' What ensues, the dust of forgetfulness hides; but I remember that one John Baynes was a grocer in Irvine, and I think that Nanse Galt, whom I have denominated Nanse Banks, kept a school in Irvine, and my description of her person was taken from that peering personage. The story anent her is a contrivance. The Irvine dancing-master was a Mr Banks; but Macskipnish is a caricature of one that afterwards taught me to walk minuets at Greenock. His story, however, is a fiction.

"I do not recollect the originals who furnished the models for the persons and incidents in the Third Chapter, except the circumstance of Mizy Spaewell throwing her old shoe after the sailor boy on his first going to sea. I know not the origin of the custom; but I have seen the cantrip practised. Of Chapter Fourth I am equally oblivious; but the incident of the limes is true, and was performed by a boy that I well knew. Nor of Chapter Fifth do I recollect much; but the two first lines of the epitaph are taken from an inscription in the West Kirkyard of Greenock, written by the Rev. Mr Buist, an antiburgher minister, on the tomb of his first wife. The third, somewhat altered, is from a very common epitaph in the Brighton churchyard. It is engraved on my memory by an exclamation of a soldier to a comrade. They were meditating among the tombs, when, with a shout of glee, he called out, 'D—n it, Jack, here's that there pale consumption again!' The rest of the epitaph is Mr Balwhidder's own composition. Chapter Sixth supplies now no reminiscences; but Chapter Seventh, especially on the burning of the Breadland, is somewhat indebted to a similar calamity that befell a cousin's house. She was herself, however, rescued from the flames, with her watch and her teapot. I remember giving great offence by a pathetic letter I wrote to condole with her on the occasion. But I would only tire the reader were I to be so particular. I shall therefore bestow my tediousness on him no longer—it is only in this way I have borrowed from recollection."—*Literary Life*. Vol. I. Pp. 152–160.

*Critical Notice by the late Henry Mackenzie, Esq., Author of
"The Man of Feeling," &c. &c.*

The following remarks appeared in the May number of *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1821, and were prefaced by a note from the editor, which we also subjoin. We have reason to know that this volunteer review proceeded from the distinguished pen to which we now assign it. No honour could be greater. As representing the literature of a former age, Mackenzie might truly be termed *Ultimus Romanorum* :—

"[In general, nothing appears more absurd than the insertion in a periodical work of an article conferring high praise on a known contributor to that work. In justification of ourselves on the present occasion, we shall only say, that the following review of the 'Annals of the Parish,' has been sent us by a person second to none in the modern literature of this country—a person whom we have not, and can scarcely hope ever to have, the honour of numbering among our regular contributors—and who, finally, is altogether ignorant even of the name of the author whose work he criticizes.—C. N.]

"In the title-page, this volume gives itself out to be arranged and edited by the Author of 'The Ayrshire Legatees,' published in several successive numbers of 'Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine;' and we think it will not at all derogate from, but rather increase, the reputation which they acquired. There is the same nature in the characters—the same idiomatic plainness in the manners and the language—the same pastoral simplicity in the good old-fashioned clergyman, who is the principal person of the drama. It describes the village and its inhabitants with the same particularity as Mrs Hamilton's well-known 'Cottagers of Glenburnie;' and though it does not exhibit them in quite so sordid a garb as that picture does, yet it dresses them in no unnatural or affected finery; they have their everyday clothes, only cleaner and more tidily put on than Mrs Hamilton's. That lady, indeed, we are inclined to think, went back, for her rural picture, to a period considerably distant, when she left Scotland; and so, by a certain

anachronism in manners, represented the lower ranks of Scotsmen and Scotswomen, of Scots cottages and Scots dairies, rather as they were forty or fifty years ago, than as they will now be found. Besides, Mrs Hamilton, writing to reform abuses and errors, has perhaps caricatured them in a certain degree, or brought them at least into a stronger light than that in which they are usually seen, even by the most impartial eyes; and by such means has, we know, given some offence to Scots people, whose patriotism, though not stronger than truth, is at least not weaker than their delicacy. These 'Annals' trace, we think very fairly, the morals and manners of a Scots inland village, from its comparatively unimproved state, in the year 1760, down to the modern period, the modern manners, the modern way of living, in the year 1809; and, amidst these, the reverend writer portrays, with perfect sincerity, those little changes which the course of his own years, as well as the course of events, produced in himself. He never forgets, however, his benevolence or his virtue; and his charity for the failings of others, and for those relaxations of moral discipline, which are perhaps inseparable from a progressive state of society, continues unabated by the prejudices of ancient recollection, by the zeal of a warmly religious clergyman, or an adherence to the rigid principles of Calvinism.

"Like the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' Mr Micah Balwhidder is the historian of his own fireside, and the various vicissitudes of their fortune. Of these there are not, like those of Dr Primrose, incidents to surprise or to interest, by their uncommon or romantic nature, in which respect the Vicar of Wakefield has perhaps gone somewhat beyond the limits of the probability even of fiction. The simple and almost uniform journal of Mr Balwhidder is so little extraordinary, as to claim from us somewhat of a belief in its reality; an advantage which belongs to those narratives that give the portrait of actual life, (such as the works of Richardson,) with so little of what we may call, in a painter's language, *relief* in the picture, as to appear flat to some romantic readers, but which have a powerful charm for such as like to look on nature in its native garb, without the ornaments in which fancy or refinement delights to dress it; and there is, as in the works of that great painter of ordinary life, an individuality and minuteness in the description of the persons, and in the detail of the little incidents, which, in their

very tediousness, have the strong impression of truth and reality. In one particular, our worthy minister is much the reverse of Dr Primrose. So far from being a *monogamist*, he marries successively three wives, in all of whom he meets with those valuable household qualities which his own virtues as a husband deserve.

“ In its humorous passages this work has no attempt at the brilliancy of wit, or the strength of caricature. The lines of its grotesque are marked with no glaring colour, but place before us the figures as they are seen in every village with which we are acquainted, and in the inhabitants of those villages as we see them at their doors or their firesides. They look, and speak, and act, as is natural to their situation, and are not forced into attitudes, either of the picturesque that they may attract admiration, or the ludicrous that may excite ridicule.

“ In the distresses which these Annals occasionally relate, the pathetic is that of ordinary, not high-wrought feeling, and its language the natural expression of affliction, without the swell of tragedy, or the whine of sentiment. The description is never laboured with epithet, nor brought forward by artificial lights thrown upon it by the skill of the describer; it is simply of what he sees, and what we believe he could not but see.

“ Though in a work of the inartificial kind, which the above general character announces, it is not easy to pick out remarkable or striking passages, the *purpurei panni* which some popular performances afford, we will submit to our readers a few extracts, by which they may judge of the merits of the work, and of the justness of the character we have given it.”

After quoting the account of Micah's settlement at Dalmailing—the arrival of the Malcolm family—the ruin of the cotton-mill—the effects produced among the parishioners by the political mania of the French Revolution—and Micah's retirement, after his fifty years' incumbency—as characteristic and favourable specimens of the work, the venerable critic thus concludes—

“ On the whole, we give our sincere and cordial approbation to these Annals, not only as amusing, highly amusing to such readers as are fond of nature and simplicity, but as instructive. As a *Remembrancer*, this little volume may be very useful. We are very apt to forget the origin of practices which universal custom has now made us consider as of established adoption, though some

of them have no merit but what prescription confers, and others are subject to censure which habit only induces us to withhold. The worthy clergyman never failed to notice the introduction into his parish of such novelties, which his pulpit sometimes, when necessary or proper, recommended to the approbation, or exposed to the censure, of his parishioners, to whose temporal and eternal welfare he was always awake. Among other practices which he reprobates with becoming severity, are smuggling, the immoderate use of spirituous liquors, the neglect of sacred duties, the establishment of idle or unprofitable places of resort, the rash and ignorant discussion of politics, the irreverent contempt of legal and wholesome authority. His opinions are always honest, always disinterested, and generally just. He censures gently, but fairly, the inattention of country gentlemen to measures of general or local improvement, when public, not private, advantage is expected to be the result; and gives its due importance to a friendly and cordial communication between different ranks of the community, which may preserve to rank or wealth its beneficial influence, and to the lower orders the respect and attention which are due to superior station, when its power and influence are exerted to the general advantage.

“On all these accounts, we sincerely and warmly recommend the perusal of these ‘Annals’ to the members of communities in situations similar to that of the parish of which this excellent clergyman had the charge. By such perusal, they may be cautioned what novelties to adopt as useful, or discourage as pernicious; and thus reap the advantage which the Roman classic imputes to the recollection of past events, by making the present time the disciple of the former;

“*Discipulus prioris est posterior dies.*”

The following excellent remarks are from the pen of Mrs Johnstone, author of “Clan Albin,” “Elizabeth de Bruce,” and other well-known and able works. They first appeared in the “Inverness Courier,” May 10, 1821:—

“If there be one heartless and brainless mortal in the circle of English readers, who does not remember Parson Abraham Adams, and Dr Primrose, Vicar of Wakefield, as the beloved of his youth,

let him not take up the Parish Annals—he can never become acquainted with the Rev. Micah Balwhidder, ‘doctor as he was sometimes called, though not of that degree.’ These three members of the sacred profession, hold the same rank among the clergy that Sir Roger de Coverley, Baron Bradwardine, and Sir Hugh Ty-old do among laymen. They take possession of the heart of the reader through every avenue, by the mere force of their guileless and kindly natures. Wisdom would not exclude them, and affection throws every inlet wide open to admit them into the sanctuary. Micah has not, to be sure, the learning or mental vigour of Parson Adams, nor the tenderness and delicacy of ‘the husband of one wife,’ the Vicar—still he is worthy, in virtue of their common good-heartedness and pastoral affections, to take his place by their side; and he is the first presbyter who has been thus honoured. We have long borne a slight grudge to ‘*the Great Unknown*,’ for those *prelatic limnings*, as Micah might say, which he has given of the Scottish clergy. Mr Blattergowl devouring in secret the fragments of the Antiquary’s feast, and courting Miss Grizzel ‘for cake and pudding’—heavy and cautious Mr Poundtext’s ‘ale-inspired studies’—or Mr Mucklewraith, ‘a wee thing crackit, but a braw preacher for a’ that,’ are ecclesiastical sketches which might have called down the scourge of Jeremy Collier, were that fiery member of the church militant still in the body.

“The author of ‘Waverley’ has indeed presented us with Mr Morton; but he is one of those self-sufficing characters of perfect wisdom, and unmingled goodness, which are within the compass of any ordinary writer, and who, as they have no need of the reader’s indulgence, obtain but a slight hold on his memory. It was therefore reserved for the present writer to bring us acquainted with a character, of which the prototype is to be found in the memory or imagination of every native of Scotland. The character of Micah with the three Mrs Balwhidders, is, however, but a subordinate part of the design of this volume, which is to present a lively record of that change in manners and national character, which has within the last sixty years wrought such miracles around us. This task is executed with the minute fidelity and lively colouring of Crabbe. We may be better understood by saying, that Micah Balwhidder is among our modern historians what Wilkie is among the Scottish painters; and we think that the Statistical Account

of Scotland will never be complete, till the faithful annals of this homely and veracious Chronicler are added to the appendix. The personal character of Micah, with his patriarchal group of wives, stands out in fine relief from the body of the composition; and the pastoral virtues which cluster around him, are enhanced and adorned by the little harmless peculiarities of a former 'student of the orthodox University of Glasgow,' now become the grave pastor of a quiet country parish. Micah has no claims to great talent, or what he calls 'a kirk-filling eloquence;' but, with a heart overflowing with kindness and thankfulness, he holds on the even tenor of his way—enjoying the innocent self-importance of his station, relishing a quiet joke, cherishing goodness, repressing vice, and doing all the good in his power in his own little circle."

(*From the Quarterly Review. Vol. XXV. 1821.*)

"The extraordinary success of what (for want of an author's name) we are obliged to designate as *the Scotch Novels*, has produced a crowd of imitators, without a single rival; and we have not thought it respectful to our readers to notice a shoal of copies and parodies which have but one merit—that of proving the popularity, and, we may add, the inimitability of their prototype.

"We are induced, however, to depart from our rule by the work before us, because, though it undoubtedly must be considered as the literary offspring of the *Scotch Novels*, it has some peculiar features which distinguish it from the servile herd of imitators; for it so far resembles other and earlier productions, that it is the period of its appearance, rather than its intrinsic quality, that determines its filiation; and it also exhibits some original, and we think clever, views of nature, which entitle it to a distinct, though brief notice on our part.

"It is in being a description of humble Scottish life, delivered in the peculiar phraseology of the lowlands, neither altogether Scottish nor English, that the *Annals of the Parish* may be said chiefly to resemble the works of the author of 'Waverley;' but the editor is perhaps hardly less indebted to that humorous sketch, 'The Memoirs of P. P., Parish Clerk,' and to the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' one of the most pleasant, and, at the same time, one of the most pathetic novels in the English language. The *Annals of*

the Parish are not equal to the Scottish novels in national delineation, nor to the 'Memoirs of P. P.' in quaintness and general satire, nor to the 'Vicar of Wakefield' in either the humour or the tenderness of that admirable work; but they have a *relish* of all these, which rendered them agreeable to our palates, and which, we think, may please, for a few hours, the taste of any reader who does not disdain

‘The short and simple annals of the poor.’

The Rev. Micah Balwhidder was ‘placed and settled as minister of the parish of Dalmailing, in the same year, and on the same day of the month, in which his sacred majesty, King George, third of the name, came to his crown and kingdom;’ and with a certain self-importance he records that his retirement took place about the very period of the infirm monarch’s secession from his high duties, and he gives us to understand that he fancies that there is some kind of relation, if not similitude, between their respective reigns.

“His induction, however, was stormy, and of bad augury: he was, it seems, presented by the *patron*, and the parishioners, with a true Knoxian independence, refused to receive a teacher at the hands of any lord of flesh and blood; they nailed up the kirk doors, and the new minister and his friends were obliged to make their way in and out through one of the windows, not without some of those accidents which might be naturally expected from such an unusual mode of church-going, especially when performed in the face of a hostile mob. Patience, good humour, and good intentions, however, in no long space overcame even the most mutinous, and the dominion of Mr Balwhidder seems to have become, and to have continued, highly popular and tranquil.

“Of course, the minister gives us frequent portraits of his principal parishioners. We shall quote the first we met, as an instance of the style of minute, and often pathetic painting, with which Mr Balwhidder unconsciously, as it were, amuses or touches us.

“‘I have now to speak of the coming of Mrs Malcolm. She was the widow of a Clyde shipmaster, that was lost at sea with his vessel. She was a genty body, calm and methodical. From morning to night she sat at her wheel, spinning the *finest lint, which suited well with her pale hands*. She never changed her widow’s weeds, and she was aye as if she had just been ta’en out of a bandbox.

The tear was often in her e'e when the bairns were at the school ; but when they came home, her spirit was lighted up with gladness, although, poor woman, she had many a time very little to give them.'

" The story of these poor children, though not what may be called the *plot* of a work which has none, contributes its principal events ; it begins with their youth, and after conducting them through various and progressive stages of fortune, ends with their final and happy establishment. And if the wig and profession of Mr Balwhidder, and the homely persons, characters, and number of his *three* wives, are—as we admit them to be—incompatible with the received ideas of the hero and heroines of a novel, then Charles Malcolm and his sister Kate must be installed in their room. We do not intend to give any thing like a view of the story—it is too scattered and diffuse for our crucible—we merely propose to select a few passages which struck us as evincing the powers of the author, and as likely to induce our readers to a perusal of the work itself.

" The picture of a parish rake, exiled by the unfortunate *success* of a love affair, and discovered, after many years, with a grey head and wooden leg in Chelsea Hospital, is marked by the *quiet* pathos and quaint humour, the union of which seems to be the author's chief characteristic.

" ' And who should this old man be, but the very identical Rab Rickerton, that was art and part in Meg Glaik's disowned bairn ; but had turned out a good soldier ; and so, in his old days, was an in-door pensioner, and very comfortable ; and he said that he had, to be sure, spent *his youth in the devil's service, and his manhood in the king's, but his old age was given to that of his Maker*, which I was blithe and thankful to hear ; and he enquired about many a one in the parish, the blooming and the green of his time, but they were all dead and buried ; and he had a contrite and penitent spirit, and read his Bible every day, delighting most in the book of Joshua, the Chronicles, and the Kings.'

" The following sly and yet simple allusions to village superstition is full of truth—the worthy minister does not *quite* believe that the coincidences were miraculous, but he notes them with a gravity which shows that he rather expected that ' something *might* have come o't.'

“ ‘ About the close of this year, there was a great sough of old prophecies, foretelling mutations and adversities, chiefly on account of the canal that was spoken of to join the rivers of the Clyde and the Forth, it being thought an impossible thing to be done; and the Adam and Eve pear-tree, in our garden, budded out in an awful manner, and had divers flourishes on it at Yule, which was thought an ominous thing, especially as the second Mrs Balwhidder was at the downlying with my eldest son Gilbert, that is the merchant in Glasgow, but nothing came o’t.’

“ And again—

“ ‘ There was a great laugh when auld Mizy Spaewell came hirpling with her bauchle in her hand, and flung it after him for gude luck. Mizy had a wonderful faith in freits, and was just an oracle of sagacity at expounding dreams, and bodes of every sort and description—besides, she was reckoned one of the best howdies in her day; but by this time she was grown frail and feckless, and she died on the same year on Hallowe’en, which made every body wonder that it *should have so fallen out for her to die on Hallowe’en.*’

“ We have not room for any more extracts, and some of our readers, perhaps, may think that we have already allotted to this little volume quite as much space as its merit strictly justifies; we therefore omit a number of other passages not inferior to those which we have quoted, and shall not even allude to the variety of characters which successively appear on the narrow stage of Dalmailing. We do not profess to be very intimate with the several states of society which the reverend annalist describes; and perhaps our northern readers may discover incongruities and inconsistencies in the manners which have not shocked our southern inexperience; but, upon the whole, we honestly confess that we have been pleased and affected by the Chronicle of Dalmailing, and think ourselves obliged in candour to recommend its excellent morality, sober pleasantry, and unassuming simplicity, both of matter and manner, to such readers as may prefer this quiet kind of merit to the glare, brilliancy, and hurry of a modern novel.”

These strictures may, or may not, have proceeded from the pen of Mr Gifford himself—they certainly smack of the author of the “*Mæviad and Baviad*,” but there is no mistaking the fine Roman hand of Lord Jeffrey in the following:—

(*From the Edinburgh Review, Vol. XXXIX. Oct. 1823*)

“ The author of the *Annals of the Parish* seems to have sought chiefly to rival the humorous and less dignified parts of his original; by large representations of the character and manners of the middling and lower orders in Scotland, intermingled with traits of sly and sarcastic sagacity, and occasionally softened and relieved by touches of unexpected tenderness and simple pathos, all harmonized by the same truth to nature and fine sense of national peculiarity. In these delineations there is more vulgarity, both of style and conception, and less poetical invention, than in the corresponding passages of the works he aspires to imitate; but, on the other hand, there is more of that kind of humour which depends on the combination of great *naïveté*, indolence, and occasional absurdity, with natural good sense, and taste and kind feelings in the principal characters—such combinations as Sir Roger De Coverley, the Vicar of Wakefield, and my Uncle Toby, have made familiar to all English readers, but of which we have not hitherto had any good Scottish representative. There is also more systematic, though very good-humoured, sarcasm, and a more distinct moral, or unity of didactic purpose, in most of his writings, than it would be easy to discover in the playful, capricious, and fanciful sketches of his great master.

“ We must now, however, say a word or two on the particular works we have enumerated; among which, and especially in the first series, there is very great difference of design, as well as inequality of merit. The first with which we happened to become acquainted, and, after all, perhaps the best and most interesting of the whole, is that entitled ‘*Annals of the Parish*,’ comprising, in one little volume of about 400 pages, the domestic chronicle of a worthy minister, on the coast of Ayrshire, for a period of no less than fifty-one years, from 1760 to 1810. The primitive simplicity of the pastor’s character, tinged as it is by his professional habits and sequestered situation, forms but a part of the attraction of this work. The brief and natural notices of the public events that signalized the long period through which it extends, and the slight and transient effects they produced on the tranquil lives and peaceful occupations of his remote parishioners, have not only a natural, we think, but a moral and monitory effect; and, while

they revive in our own breasts the almost forgotten impressions of our childhood and early youth, as to the same transactions, make us feel the actual insignificance of those successive occurrences which, each in its turn, filled the minds of its contemporaries—and the little real concern which the bulk of mankind have in the public history of their day. This quiet and detailed retrospect of fifty years, brings the true moment and value of the events it embraces to the test, as it were, of their actual operation on particular societies; and helps to dissipate the illusion, by which private persons are led to suppose that they have a personal interest in the wisdom of cabinets, or the madness of princes. The humble simplicity of the chronicler's character assists, no doubt, the sobering effect of his narrative. The natural and tranquil manner in which he puts down great things by the side of little—and considers as exactly on the same level, the bursting of the parish mill-dam and the commencement of the American troubles—the victory of Admiral Rodney and the donation of £50 to the kirk-session—are all equally edifying and agreeable; and illustrate, in a very pleasing way, that law of intellectual, as well as of physical optics, by which small things at hand, uniformly appear greater than large ones at a distance. The great charm of the work, however, is in the traits of character which it discloses, and the commendable brevity with which the whole chronicle is digested. We know scarcely any instance in which a modern writer has shown such forbearance and consideration for his readers. With very considerable powers of humour, the ludicrous incidents are never dwelt upon with any tediousness, nor pushed to the length of burlesque or caricature—and the more seducing touches of pathos with which the work abounds, are intermingled and cut short with the same sparing and judicious hand—so that the temperate and natural character of the pastor is thus, by a rare merit and felicity, made to preponderate over the tragic and comic genius of the author. That character is, as we have already hinted, as happily conceived as it is admirably executed—contented, humble, and perfectly innocent and sincere—very orthodox, and zealously Presbyterian, without learning or habits of speculation—soft-hearted, and full of indulgence and ready sympathy, without any enthusiasm or capacity of devoted attachment—given to old-fashioned prejudices, with an instinctive sagacity in practical affairs

—and unconsciously acute in detecting the characters of others, and singularly awake to the beauties of nature, without a notion either of observation or of poetry—very patient and primitive, in short, indolent and gossiping, and scarcely ever stirring, either in mind or in person, beyond the limits of his parish. The style of the book is curiously adapted to the character of the supposed author—very genuine homely Scotch in the idiom and many of the expressions, but tinctured with scriptural phrases, and some relics of college learning—and all digested in the grave and methodical order of an old-fashioned sermon.”

After extracting the description of the arrival of Mrs Malcolm in the parish—the departure of her son Charles to sea—and his death in a sea-fight, the critic says—

“ We like these tender passages the best ; but the reader should have a specimen of the humorous vein also. The following we think excellent.”

[The arrival of the English dean—the sacrilegious theft of Jenny Guffaw and her daughter—the description of Mr Macskip-nish, the first dancing-master—and the death of Nanse Banks, the old parish schoolmistress.]

The following brief notice from the same distinguished critic, in our humble opinion, scarcely does justice to the Ayrshire Legatees.

“ The next of this author’s publications, we believe, was ‘The Ayrshire Legatees,’ also in one volume, and a work of great, and similar, though inferior merit, to the former. It is the story of the proceedings of a worthy Scottish clergyman and his family, to whom a large property had been bequeathed by a relation in India, in the course of their visit to London to recover this property. The patriarch himself and his wife, and his son and daughter, who form the party, all write copious accounts of what they see to their friends in Ayrshire—and being all lowly and simply bred, and quite new to the scenes in which they are now introduced, make up among them a very entertaining miscellany of original, *naïve* and preposterous observations. The idea of thus making a family club, as it were, for a varied and often contradictory account of the same objects—each tinging his picture with his peculiarities, and unconsciously drawing his own character in the course of the description, was first exemplified, we believe,

in the Humphrey Clinker of Smollett, and has been since copied with success in the Bath Guide, Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, the Fudge Family, and other ingenious pieces, both in prose and verse. Though the conception of the Ayrshire Legatees, however, is not new, the execution and details must be allowed to be original; and, along with a good deal of *twaddle*, and too much vulgarity, certainly display very considerable powers both of humour, invention, and acute observation."

(*From the Edinburgh Monthly Review. July 1821.*)

"Before the novelist of the North had conjured away our sympathies from inexorable fathers, wilful daughters, waiting-maids, ensigns, rope-ladders, and post-chaises; ruined the market for sentiment, shrieks, and swoons; sent into abeyance the whole class of the Strephons and Phillisses, the Lydias and Edwins, the Seraphinas and Zephyrettas; and made obsolete even the Lovelaces and Grandisons—what chance of escaping derision would have been the man's who should have proposed to work up into a novel such raw and rude materials as the everyday incidents of a remote Scottish parish! Yet true it is that a novel, with no other subject, now lies before us, which, although it has not only scorned the old-fashioned sickly sensibilities, and commonplace extravagances, but has not borrowed an incident from romantic history or local legend, an association from clanship or chivalry, or an image from the stores of the 'land of the mountain and the flood,' has succeeded in sustaining a peculiar and original interest of its own, with no creditor but nature, in her simplest guise of truth and pathos. The artist has set his canvass for the homeliest subject, and with much sagacity, and, in general, good feeling, with a knowledge of the world which estimates the value of the colouring of innocence, and with a quiet humour

—'that raises sly the fair impartial laugh,

and knows with still finer tact,

—'from the yet laughing eye to draw the tear,'

has finished, on the whole, a very pleasing picture.

"A well-directed imagination can seize many poetical as well as

moral points, in the interesting relation which subsists between a parish minister and his flock—impart the charm of fiction to a description of the tranquil reality of an humble rural pastor's parental cares and unambitious labours, and the affectionate attachment of his grateful people—and cull the simple incidents of village life, to build withal a tale of humour and pathos, or, with yet higher object, to point a moral of deep social concernment and universal application. The observation is now, perhaps, trite, that the respectable character, moral and intellectual, of the Scottish peasantry, comes not more of the long-established system of parish schools, than of the intimate yet well regulated converse they enjoy with their spiritual teachers. The life of the parish pastor is devoted to his charge; his residence is imperative and indispensable; pluralities are to him unknown; and the general equality of benefices shuts out ambition, or the love of change from his bosom. Of a rank in life, which, while it does not repel the confidence and affection of his people, insures their respect and deference, he is in daily contact with them; their everyday adviser, as well as their religious guide; and from that kindly intercourse results a general mildness of demeanour, a sobriety of thought, and strength of attachment, of which none can form an adequate idea who has not spent some time within the actual territory of a well-regulated Scottish parish. It is there we find the simple system in action which so beautifully humanizes an entire people; and in the bosom of many a wanderer from his humble home, keeps warm the best affections of the heart, and unbroken the cherished tie which yet binds him to his cottage, his village, and his country.

“These Annals are intended to introduce the reader to the internal structure of that simple polity. They have, besides, a subordinate object; namely, to exhibit the effects of the rapid improvements—in general, civil economy—of the last fifty years, on the simple habits and manners of remote rural life; and instructively, to illustrate the reasonings of political economists, which demonstrate the interesting reciprocity of urban and rural prosperity; and trace the gradual but sure course by which the comforts, luxuries, and even elegances of manufacturing skill, make their way to the remotest cultivator of the soil, and realize the economical fiction, that the button-maker of Birmingham cultivates the fields of Devonshire and Caithness.

"The parish chronicled is Dalmailing, a fictitious name, as is that of the town of Irville in the neighbourhood; which last name, however, from its similarity to Irvine, coupled with other local allusions in the narrative, fixes the locality in the county of Ayr, in the west of Scotland. The minister is himself the annalist or an incumbency of half a century. He is a character of the most primitive simplicity, more common in the preceding than the present age of the Scottish church. He has studied at Glasgow College every thing but the world; a knowledge which all the learning of *Alma Mater* could not supply. But he does not need the acquisition—indeed, is better without it; for while the *deficit* runs little risk of detection by his yet simpler flock, there is something in perfect blamelessness of life, kindliness of heart, and excellence of example, which operates more powerfully on a guileless community, than all the talent in the world not allied to these primitive graces."

* * * * *

"There is no species of merit, in works of genius, more questioned by an envious world than that of originality. As invariably as we set ourselves to find out, when we see the children of our acquaintances, whether they resemble father or mother, or both, we are tempted, when a work like that before us comes in our way, to conclude that it must of course be a copy; and we manifest a very generous alacrity in assigning it an original. Good sense and fairness, however, would dictate some pretty obvious prior considerations. Although it belongs to a genius unquestionably original as well as powerful, to discover and first set foot in a new region of literature, there may be in that region a great variety of soils to cultivate, and produce to raise; many more than the discoverer can himself undertake. Now he is not precluded from the credit of originality, who is only beholden to the first adventurer for the more general discovery, great as that debt is; but who skilfully appropriates and turns to account, in the new territory, spots that suit himself, and which possibly not suiting his precursor, might, as to all their capabilities, have remained unknown. An imitator, however, can only follow his leader closely in the particular walk, and is unable to diverge from his footsteps into a path of his own, however narrow and short, or to move without betraying the manner and all the pecu-

liarities of his prototype. The head of a school of fictitious composition must have many such humble followers, who are all but plagiarists; but his were a narrow school, which did not admit of a variety of resembling yet distinguishable excellence, in authors whose honourable relation to him is more allegiance to a chief than servitude to an instructor. Allegiance is, beyond all doubt, due by the author before us to the great novelist of the day. No one who reads this work will doubt, that, if the Scots novels had not had a previous existence, we never should have seen the ‘Annals of the Parish.’ But of this we feel as much assurance, that the ‘Annals of the Parish’ might not, or rather would not, have been imagined by the other novelist; and that but for this author we should never have seen a composition in the precise line which, in them, he has chosen. We are far from rating this work near to the pitch of the Scots novels, although here and there passages do occur, which affect us, in some degree, after the manner of these wonderful productions; yet it is coin of greatly inferior denomination—painting of much lower style and subject. There are in it, nevertheless, much original conception, humour, and pathos; some well-imagined incident, with a distinct drawing of character, a good effect of relief and contrast, and an occasional vividness of colouring, which set before our eyes the minute delineations of Crabbe.”

We now conclude the anecdotes and illustrations relating to the tales in this volume, with the following incidental notices from the pen of Mr Galt himself. His own remarks on the “Ayrshire Legatees” are these:—

“The ‘Ayrshire Legatees’ is a work that cannot be justly appreciated as a novel, although the passages are strung together with something of a tale; and I ought, perhaps, here to describe in what manner I was led to think of it.

“When I had leisure, it always afforded me great pleasure of a particular kind to go a lion-showing with the strangers in London, and the zest of this kind of recreation was in proportion to the eccentricity of the characters.

“In the course of time I had fallen in with persons from the country not unlike the members of the Pringle family, and had been often much amused with the *naïveté* of their remarks, particularly on common things in London, unknown in remote parts of the kingdom, and, I may add, unrequired.

“The attempt to express their sentiments was undoubtedly dramatic; but it has not always been so understood. I have been called on myself to explain opinions ascribed to the members of the Pringle family as if they had been my own, particularly the political notions put into the mouth of ‘my son Andrew Pringle;’ and all my protestations against this have been unavailing. This work, however, and my Autobiography, with the whole tenor of my publications, and the complexion of my life, constitute a sufficient vindication; for politics have never been with me of a very ardent character, especially personal politics, and I am not fairly dealt by when it is imagined that political considerations enter very largely into my motives. Impulse or temperament, or by whatever other name it may be known, made me early a Tory; that is, an adherent to principles, independent of popular approbation. Riper judgment has made me see that it was necessary there should be, for the good of the people, partisans, who would always adhere to the Government; and I thought, whether Governments were framed from men who professed Whig or Tory principles, the influence of the enjoyments of the place would naturally always make the possessors think in the way I did.

“These reflections are made here, because it has been supposed that I made Andrew Pringle the representative of my own opinions; but I did not. He is by far too ultra for me, and has expressed himself with respect to many things much more acridly than I would allow myself to do, in speaking my own sentiments.

“I am not insensible, however, that in thus considering me as answerable personally for the notions of the characters, a considerable indirect compliment is paid; but it may admit of some drawback, inasmuch as it may be held to be equivocal. No one doubts, however, that the sentiments of Iago passed through the mind of Shakspeare; but who imagines that Shakspeare spoke his own feelings in what he made Iago utter? The difference between the development of a character in a narrative and in dramatic personation, is certainly not obvious; but still it is such that the author should never be held responsible for the manner or matter which he employs to bring out his characters.”—*Literary Life*, vol. i., pp. 227—229.

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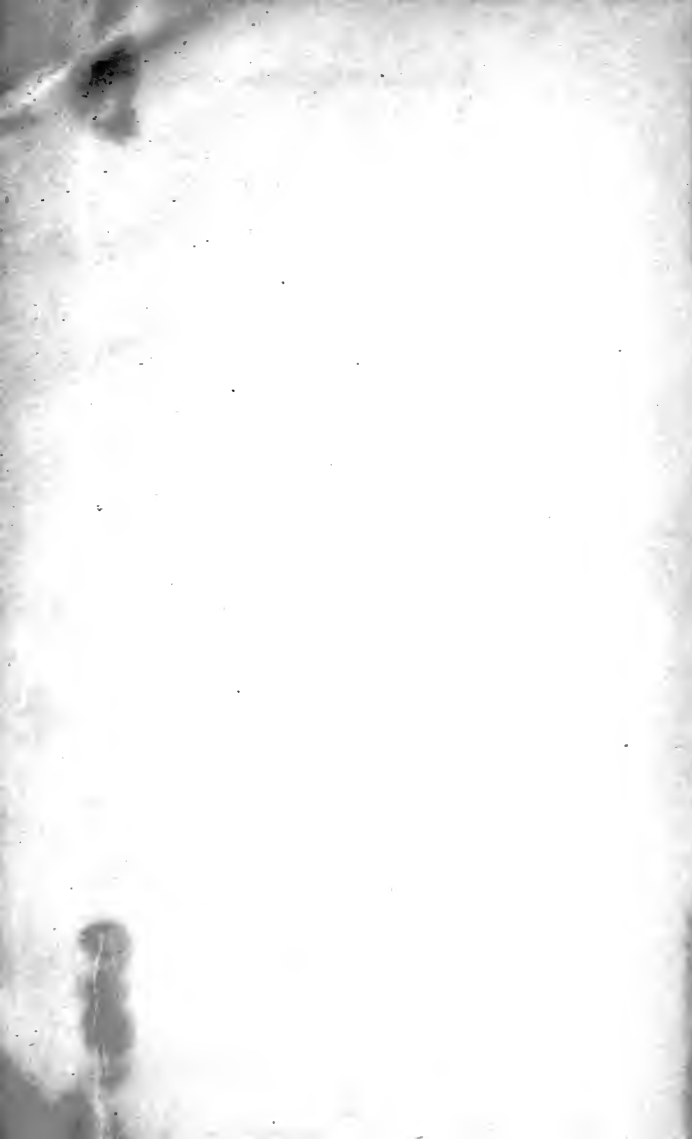


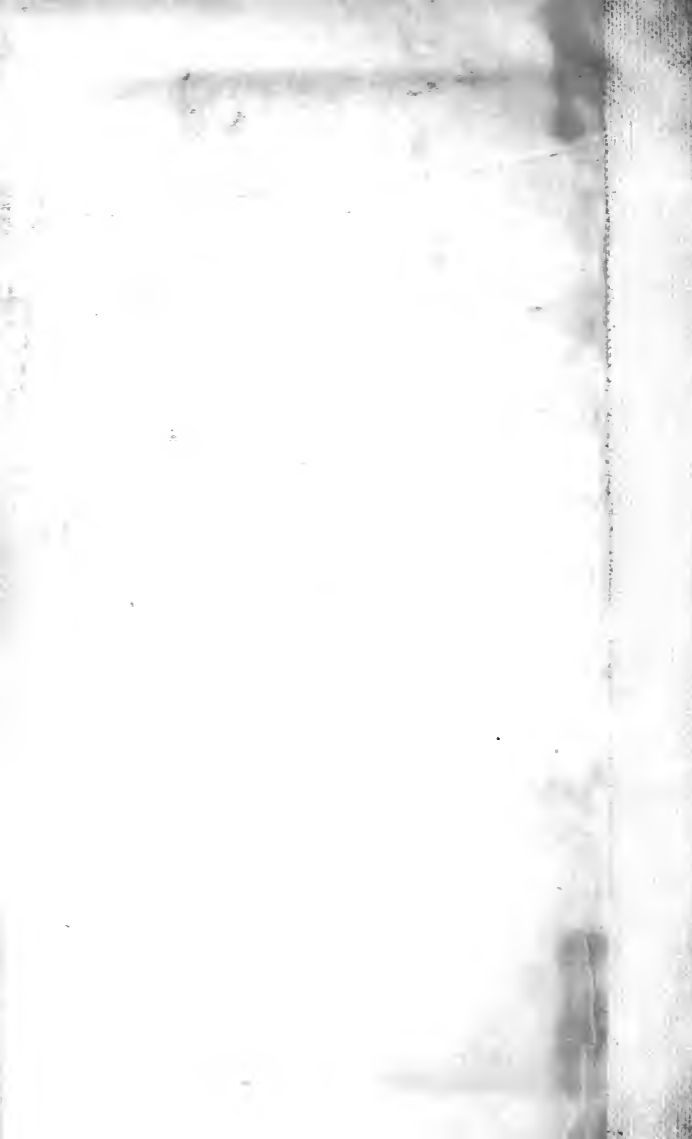












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